

King George V Primary School



Confidentiality Policy

September 2018

Confidentiality Policy

Introduction

All schools are asked on occasions to keep information confidential. 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 about 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 any such pressure

Personal disclosures

Disclosures from pupils may take place from time to time. When this happens the member of staff will need to follow up the disclosure with the pupil as soon as possible and definitely before the end of the school day. If the disclosure is of a serious nature the member must inform the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher immediately so that the appropriate action can be taken in line with whole school Child Protection Policy.

Key Points:

- Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained at all times.
- Pupils should know that staff cannot always offer unconditional confidentiality - depending upon the seriousness of the situation i.e. if the child is at risk for any reason.
- 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 local young person's advice service.
- Any personal information should be regarded as private and not passed on indiscriminately (for example 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 the Head Teacher in the first instant if not available the Deputy Head Teacher immediately
- Pupils should be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers and be given support to do so where ever possible.
- All Teaching Staff with the Head and Deputy will speak with parents on a daily basis when the need arises depending upon the serious of the situation - any Child Protection issues to be dealt with according to our Child Protection Policy.
- Government guidance requires professionals to consult as much as possible with parents about their children when referring to another agency. In general, parents should be asked if they wish

to be referred, UNLESS THERE IS REASON TO THINK THAT OBTAINING SUCH CONSENT MAY PUT THE YOUNG PERSON AT RISK. If your 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 the referral and is already aware of it.

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 Discipline Committees, do not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to any person 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.
- Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be in the head teacher's office and electronic records will only be available from the head teacher's computer.
- 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 matters in order 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 visitors of the school are working in classes, they do not discuss educational matters outside the classroom. For example the specific use of teaching assistant time for particular pupils or groups of pupils, teaching assistants have different roles within a class, including the support of children with special educational needs, the provision and work with these children is for the teacher to discuss with the relevant 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 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.