

# CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY



<b>Date Policy Approved by the FGB</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2012
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	February 2013
<b>Committee Responsible for the Policy</b>	Full Governing Body
<b>Name of Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lesley Spicer

## 1. Associated policies

- Anti - Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Health And Safety Policy
- Data protection Policy

### Further Reading

Staff and Governors are encouraged to make reference to the following documents connected to the development of this Confidentiality Policy:

- *Sex and relationship education guidance*, DfES, July 2000, ref: 0116/2000
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Children's Services guidance*, DfES/DH, May 2003, ref: 31553
- *Developing sex and relationships education in schools: guidance and training activities pack for school governors* – Sex Education Forum/National Children's Bureau (NCB), 2003, ISBN: 1904787029
- *HIV in schools: good practice guide to supporting children infected or affected by HIV*, Children and Young People HIV Network/NCB, 2005, ISBN: 1904787479
- *National Healthy School Status – a guide for schools*, DH, Sept. 2005, REF: 270390

## 2. Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for ensuring appropriate levels of confidentiality at Peel Common Nursery and Infant School.

## 3. Aim of this Policy

All members of staff working on the school site are clear about the levels of confidentiality that they can offer to the children, parents and members of the school community and can themselves expect of others at school.

#### 4. Objectives

- 4.1 For everyone to understand the varying levels of confidentiality which might be offered in different circumstances.
- 4.2 Members of staff understand and apply varying levels of confidentiality in different circumstances to children, parents, outside agencies, governors and colleagues.

#### 5. Principles

- 5.1 A clear, explicit and well-publicised confidentiality policy ensures good practice throughout the school which staff (including staff from external agencies), parents and pupils can easily understand
- 5.2 The school needs to be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities e.g. child protection procedures
- 5.3 Different professionals can offer varying levels of confidentiality in different circumstances, which can confuse staff and pupils
- 5.4 Sometimes parents and families may wish to disclose information confidentially to the school. Schools need to be clear about their position.

**The following has been approved by Hampshire County Council's legal department. It is important that all staff understand that these properly describe school policy.**

#### 6. All School Staff Members

6.1 We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about it to their parents/carers. This can result in enormous stress for the individual which impacts on their education and health. Some pupils may feel that they can turn to teachers and other staff members for support and we want to be as helpful as we can whilst recognising that there may be potential difficulties in being supportive. You should adhere to the following policy:

##### 6.2 When talking with pupils

- a) It is important for you to be aware of maintaining your professional boundaries.
- b) You must 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.

**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.** You need to explain to a child that if there is a child protection issue where the pupil, or others, are likely to be

at risk of significant harm, you are under a duty to inform Mrs Spicer [Child Protection Liaison Officer CPLO] or Mrs Gordon [Deputy CPLO] who may have to involve other agencies.

- c) School staff can only offer confidentiality to pupils on issues that do not involve significant illegal activities e.g. drug trafficking, arson. **If you feel that you have to break confidentiality with the pupil, you must tell the child and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.**
- d) In talking with pupils, you 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.

### 6.3 Parents and families

We recognise that sometimes there may be family issues which might 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 parent first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and/or there is an overriding child protection concern.

### 6.4 Staff and Governors

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

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

### 6.5 Written Information

- a) Items such as School Reports and Foundation Stage Profiles are confidential to parents and staff and are kept on file and not accessible to others.
- b) IEPs are confidential to parents, the SENCO and the staff working directly with the child. They are kept secured on file except when in use. They are shared with parents each parent's evening and when needed. The Headteacher has access to them as needed. IEPs may not be shared with other agencies without parental permission.
- c) The SEN Register is drawn up by the SENCO and copied to the Headteacher. Both copies are secured on file.

### 6.6 Private Communications

- a) Envelopes containing confidential information should be marked PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL, and where applicable should be labelled to be opened by addressee only.
- b) Before sending a fax containing confidential information, confirm with the recipient that they will be waiting by their fax machine to receive the communication and/or that the fax machine is in a secure place with no public access.
- c) Prior to sending emails containing confidential information:  
go into the options menu and select **IMPORTANCE – HIGH -SENSITIVITY–**

CONFIDENTIAL - then tick two boxes to require a 'received' message and a 'read' message,

- d) To make a confidential call please request the use of the Head teacher's or Deputy head's office.

## 6.7 Outside Agencies

Staff must respect the confidentiality required by other agencies.

- a) Reports from Paediatricians, Speech and Language Therapists etc. usually state that they must not be copied without permission. The SENCO will request permission from the author and parent if further copies are needed.
- b) Parental permission is required prior to a referral of a pupil to agencies such as Educational Psychology, Behaviour Support Services.
- c) Prior to a Child Protection Conference a confidential report has to be prepared and sent to the conference secretary. This report must first be given to the parent[s] / carer[s] to enable them to state their views on the accuracy of the report. The class teacher will be requested to assist the Headteacher in compiling the report. The Headteacher will share it with parents and receive their comments. All discussions and reports read at a Child Protection Conference are confidential to those attending.
- d) 'Youth at Risk / CYP Reports produced by the police following an incident involving a pupil are confidential and may not be copied.