



## **Confidentiality Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

<b>School Name: Our Lady Star of the Sea RCVA - Horden</b>
<b>Consultation that has taken place:</b> e.g. this policy has been developed by a working group which has consulted with parents/carers, pupils, staff etc
<b>Date Policy Formally Approved By Governors:</b>
<b>Date Policy Becomes Effective:</b>
<b>Review Date (s):</b>
<b>Person(s) responsible for Implementation and Monitoring:</b> <i>Miss J. Jones</i>
<b>Other relevant policies</b> e.g. PSHCE Policy, Child Protection Policy, School Mission Statement, LAC Policy ..etc

### **2. Aim**

“To provide clear advice and guidance on the rules of pupil confidentiality in the school to reassure staff, parents/carers, visitors and pupils.”

### **3. Rationale**

Pupils occasionally make personal disclosures, either in class or to individual teachers. They may disclose that they are engaging in under-age sexual activity; that they, or friends or relatives, are using drugs; or that they have been abused. Teachers may come to possess sensitive information about pupils, some of it about illegal activity. All parties need to be clear about the rules of confidentiality which apply in these circumstances.

All personal disclosures should be treated sensitively and reported to the designated teacher for Child Protection. Any disclosure should be treated in an appropriate manner and should not be disclosed to a third party outside of school unless by the designated teacher seeking support or intervention.

The school's Mission Statement highlights the importance of promoting and creating a caring, loving Christian environment in which **all** can achieve their full potential. It is therefore important that confidential information is treated with the respect it deserves regardless of the nature of the information.

The school is committed to ensuring that every child is safeguarding and recognises the importance of ensuring that every child feels safe, secure and protected.

The school recognises its role in contributing to the family and community health and well-being. It therefore aims to work in partnership to ensure that all necessary support is provided to families.

The school has an active School Council and involves children in decision making within the school. It encourages parental involvement and seeks the views of all stakeholders through regular questionnaires and surveys.

#### 4. **Purposes or Objectives**

*What do you want to achieve? What is the intended outcome of your school confidentiality policy?*

- To provide a clear and consistent message for pupils, staff, parents and visitors about confidentiality in school.
- To provide guidance about who needs to know what in particular instances.
- To provide necessary training for teaching, support and supervisory staff in order to ensure that procedures and policy is followed

#### 5. **Guidelines**

*How will the objectives be met?*

- Information about individuals (pupils, parents, staff and visitors) should not be passed on indiscriminately. The head teacher may wish to be informed in all or some circumstances. Staff have a contractual obligation to comply with the policy.
- Unconditional confidentiality should not be offered to pupils or their parents. Information about behaviour likely to cause harm to the pupil or to others must be passed to the appropriate agency.
- It should be made clear to pupils that teachers cannot promise confidentiality and that on some occasions information may need to be passed on in the young person's best interest. However, the pupil should be informed about when this has to happen, what will be done with the information and who will have access to it.
- In the case of illegal activity, the school should take actions in the best interests of the pupil. This does not necessarily involve informing the police. For example; teachers are not obliged to inform the police about illegal drug activity. The LA's Handling Incidents of Drug Misuse Policy gives clear guidance on this matter

- Teachers are not obliged to pass on information about pupils to their parents/carers, although where the teacher believes the pupil to be at moral or physical risk, or in breach of the law, they must ensure that the pupil is aware of the risks and encourage them to seek support from their parents/carers.
- Outside agencies and others providing support for the PSHCE programme, must be made aware of, and abide by, the school policy on disclosures and confidentiality. However, they may also have a role in providing advice and support directly to pupils. The boundary between these two roles must be agreed with the school and the distinction, in terms of the right to confidentiality, be made clear to pupils.
- Some people, such as school health advisors (school nurses) are bound by their own professional codes of confidentiality in their work with children and young people e.g. the medical code of confidentiality (Fraser Guidelines). Pupils who seek help from teachers about their personal health e.g. contraception or pregnancy, can be referred to the school nurse or their family doctor whose professional code of practice will be followed.
- In lessons, teachers should establish from the beginning that it is inappropriate to disclose personal information. Ground rules, which ensure pupils agree not to pressure one another to answer questions about their own experiences, also apply to staff.
- It is important that staff are also aware that they should not disclose confidential information about other members of staff unless to inform the designated teacher that intervention or support is required

This also links with sickness guidelines and policy.

## 6. **Implementation and Monitoring**

*How will you know whether the objectives have been met?*

How is the policy to be implemented in practice?

*In practice the policy will be shared with staff, children and parents and approved by the Governing Body.*

*If the objectives are met then the children, staff and parents/carers will be confident in the school's approach to confidentiality and there will be good, honest communication.*

*The policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and Governing Body.*

*The Headteacher will work closely with staff and parents to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.*

## 7. **Conclusion**

*In conclusion the school aims to fully support all stakeholders, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained and that the necessary actions to support individuals are appropriate and supportive.*

