

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy EYFS



Policy on Confidentiality

Date of review: July 2019

This policy applies to all staff at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Academy

Aim

To have a comprehensive confidentiality policy which gives clarity to parents/cares, pupils and staff about levels of confidentiality that can be offered by the school in different circumstances.

Why the policy was developed

The issue of confidentiality in schools is becoming increasingly complex as the integration of human rights legislation develops. Schools are being encouraged to develop policies in response to the Change for Children programme and the legislation regarding Information Sharing. A school confidentiality policy is now a requirement for the Enhanced Healthy Schools status.

Staff support and training

Information regarding the confidentiality policy will form part of all new staffs' induction training.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

All school staff members: Confidentiality and pupils

• 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 some potential difficulties in being supportive.

Staff should adhere to the following policy:

- When talking with pupils, it is important for staff to be aware of maintaining professional boundaries.
- Staff must be clear to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue.
- Pupils should be warned that if there is a child protection issue where the pupil, or others, is likely to be at risk of significant harm, that staff are under a duty to inform the school's Principal/Child Protection Officer who may have to involve other agencies. 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.
- In all cases where staff feel that they have to break confidentiality with the pupil, they must inform the pupil, (unless there is a good reason not to inform them e.g. risk of harm) and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.
- In talking with pupils, staff 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.

Children's Records in the EYFS

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

Developmental Records

- These records, including photographs, samples of work, observational notes are kept in the classroom and can be freely accessed and contributed to, by staff, the child and the child's parents

Personal Records

- These records are stored in a cupboard in a suitably safe place which is only accessible by staff.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other member of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs
- Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person

Should a child move to a different setting, all appropriate records will be passed on to the child's new setting.

Parents/Carers and Families

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

Staff and Governors

All staff can normally 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 or
- There is a legal obligation to disclose such information or
- It is necessary for legal proceedings or
- Despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

Linked policies

The following policies are linked and supported by the confidentiality policy:

Behaviour/ anti-bullying policy

Child protection policy

Health and safety policy

PSHE policy (Personal, Social, Health Education policy)

Drug incidents policy

Sex and Relationships policy

It will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

APPENDIX 1: Statement for parents and carers concerning confidentiality and pupils.

There is increasing national concern for the emotional health and well-being of young people growing up in today's society. We recognise that parents and carers want to do all they can to support their child but even in the most supportive of relationships where there is excellent communication between parent/carer and child, there can be occasions when they are worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about it with you. This may result in enormous stress for the pupil that can impact on their education, health and behaviour, unfortunately self-harm and even suicide in the most extreme cases. Whilst we recognise that parents and carers will naturally be disappointed if their child does not choose to talk with you about what is troubling them, we feel there could be even more distress if the pupil is unable to cope with the issue themselves. On this basis we have agreed the following:

School staff

Our staff will be supportive to pupils who approach them with concerns but will make it clear that they cannot offer confidentiality to the pupil on anything that involves an illegal activity or anything that is a potential child protection issue where the pupil or others are likely to be at risk of significant harm.

Senior staff in the school will liaise with parents/carers as appropriate in case where a staff member has reported an issue over which they cannot offer confidentiality. Staff will support pupils to inform their parents/carers about issues that are troubling them as appropriate.

APPENDIX 2: Statement for pupils concerning confidentiality

We understand that there may be times when there are things which may be worrying you but you can't talk about them with your family. Teachers and other members of school staff will do all we can to help you but need to know the following:

- If you really want to talk to someone confidentially, (without anyone else knowing what you have said you can speak to any adult that you trust and know. This will most likely be your class teacher or your teaching assistant. The Headteacher and Deputy Head of School are always happy to listen to you and hear your worries.
 - The teachers and other members of staff in the school will often be able to help you with many of the things that may be worrying you but they cannot promise to keep everything to themselves. For example if you tell them about
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