

Great Orton Primary School

Confidentiality Policy

This policy was reviewed and updated by the Head / Governing Body in May 2018

It was adopted by the Governing Body on 21st May 2018

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

Review Date: May 2020

Introduction

In the light of recent developments such as:

- The Children's Act 2004
- OFSTED self evaluation
- Extended Schools
- The revised Data Protection Legislation
- The Common Assessment Framework for vulnerable young people

It is becoming increasingly important for school to have a confidentiality policy which can clarify for staff, pupils and parents the nature of confidentiality at Great Orton School.

Policy to be reviewed: Every two years

Members responsible: Head Teacher/ Chair of Governors

Aims

1. All relevant parties working on the school site are clear about the levels of confidentiality they can offer to the school community and can expect themselves.
2. Staff, pupils and parents are clear about the areas in which the school community may have obligations to breach the otherwise fundamental principle of the confidentiality of personal information.

Objectives

1. To be transparent about the process for developing and reviewing the policy.
2. For all relevant parties to understand the varying levels of confidentiality which may be offered in different circumstances; including the limits on their ability to maintain the confidentiality of personal information and to set out the circumstances in which staff and pupils would make clear those limits.

Who the policy relates to

The policy relates to:-

- All teaching and non-teaching staff employed in the school
- All visiting staff working with young people on the school site during the school day
- Depending on contractual arrangements, staff from external agencies delivering services on the school site eg. Youth Service, Educational Welfare , Children's Services and Voluntary Organisations
- Adult and Pupil Mentors
- Governors

All School Members

- We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about to their parents/carers. This can result in considerable stress for the individual and can impact on their education and health. Some pupils may feel that they can turn to teachers and other members of staff for support. We recognise that this can lead to difficulties in being supportive. School members should adhere to the following policy:

- When talking with pupils it is important for you to be aware of maintaining your professional boundaries. Whilst being supportive professional distance should be maintained and pupils encouraged to access confidential services offered on school site.
- You must be clear to pupils that you cannot offer **unconditional** confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about issues where confidentiality becomes an issue.
- Pupils should be made aware that if you believe there is a child protection issue then you are under a **duty to inform the school's Child Protection Officer who may have to involve other agencies**(See Child Protection Policy)
- School Staff can only offer confidentiality to pupils on issues that do not involve significant illegal activities e.g. drug trafficking, arson etc. If the conversation begins to move to this kind of issue the pupil should be warned that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- If you feel you must break the pupil's confidence you must inform the pupil and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.
- Pupils should be encouraged to share their concerns with parents/carers or alternatively confidential services such as the school nurse.

The requirement for confidentiality is within the Code of Practice for school nurses and other health service staff, however, health professionals like everyone else, must inform appropriate services in the event of a Child Protection issue.

Pupil/Adult Mentoring

All mentoring and support programmes will cover confidentiality in their training.

- The Mentor must tell the Mentoring co-ordinator or a teacher if a pupils discloses any form of abuse or any other information that may lead the mentor to worry about their safety.
- If the pupil is about to disclose this sort of information, the mentor must inform them that they will need to inform a member of staff.
- If the mentor has concerns over the content of a mentoring meeting they are to discuss it with the mentoring co-ordinator. In these circumstances the mentoring co-ordinator is bound by the same rules as the mentor.

Parents

We recognise that sometimes there are family issues which might affect a pupil which the family will only disclose to us if they are confident that the information will remain confidential. Such information will be treated sensitively and discussed with the parent if the need is felt to share such information. This does not apply if the pupil is considered to be at immediate risk or a child protection concern.

All parents will sign the Code of Conduct Policy Agreement when their child enters Great Orton Primary School (copies of signed agreements are kept on file by the School Secretary).

Staff and Governors

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

- It impinges on the terms of their contract
- Endangers pupils or other members of staff
- There is legal obligation to disclose such information
- It is necessary for legal proceedings
- Despite the duty of confidence it is in the staff member's interests or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the school's Social Networking policy.