

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Date of policy: June 2012

Policy developed by: Rebecca Surridge (PSHCE Co-ordinator) in consultation with all staff, governors, parents and children

Review date: June 2015

Introduction:

When teachers are working with children and young people on personal, social and health education programmes, or in the teaching of any sensitive or controversial issue, it is possible that some children will want to discuss information that is of a personal nature, or may sometimes make disclosures about 'risky' or illegal behaviour. It is very important that the school supports its pupils, parents and staff by having a clear policy on confidentiality to provide guidance when these situations occur.

Young people need to be clear about the rules of confidentiality that apply in their school, and that a member of staff cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. These principles are explicit within our Confidentiality Policy, though other relevant policies, such as PSHCE, Child Protection, SRE and Drugs Education, should also be read.

Aims:

When teachers are working with children on personal, social and health education programmes, or in the teaching of any sensitive or controversial issue, it is possible that some children will want to discuss information that is of a personal nature, or may sometimes make disclosures about risky or illegal behaviour. This policy aims to set out guidelines for responding to such situations.

Objectives:

- To ensure that staff, parents and pupils understand what will happen if these situations occur.
- To define 'confidentiality'.
- To explain the implications of this for practice within the school.
- To ensure that staff, pupils and parents understand what is meant by 'confidentiality' at North Nibley School.
- To ensure that staff and volunteer helpers consider the issue of confidentiality when discussing the children in their care and incidents that may have happened in school.

Guidelines for practice:

This policy is particularly relevant to the teaching of PSHCE, Drug Education and SRE. However it also covers all situations both in and outside the classroom.

1. 'Ground Rules' will be made explicit in lessons whenever appropriate. These Rules will include the following :
 - We will respect each other's views
 - We will listen carefully to one another
 - There will be no put-downs!
 - We will not name names or talk about things that are very personal to us. If I (the teacher) thinks that someone has said something that makes me think they are being hurt in some way or are not safe, I will have to talk to someone else about it.
 - When the lesson is tackling particularly sensitive matters such as puberty, sex or drug education, we will add another rule which is that:
 - 'Whatever we talk about in this lesson will stay between us. No gossiping in the playground!'
2. The school will ensure that staff cannot ever give unconditional confidentiality
 - Following the guidance in our Child Protection policy, where information of a sensitive nature is disclosed, this must be treated seriously and with sensitivity. Under no circumstances must a promise be made that a teacher will not tell anyone else and the teacher must explain that in order to help, they may need to talk to other people. If a child discloses information that indicates that they may be at risk of abuse, neglect or harm, the teacher must seek further advice as indicated in our Child Protection Policy.
 - In the following circumstances we will always break confidentiality:
 - * Life and immediate risk
 - * Prevention of terrorism
 - * A third party is at risk of abuse or neglect
 - * When you have been subpoenaed to a Court of Law
3. Our procedure following a disclosure will be :
 - a) We will agree with the child who we will talk to and what we will say.
 - b) We will explain how we will continue to support them through the process.
 - c) 'Confidentiality' also refers to protecting the information we hold about the pupils in this school and their families. All staff will endeavour to maintain confidentiality when appropriate, for example by considering the conversations they have about pupils and their families, the purpose of these conversations

and where these take place. All students and helpers at the school will be made aware of this through our confidentiality Statement (see below)

Confidentiality Statement:

Teachers talk about their job constantly. Conversations at breaks and lunchtimes are often about school, individual children and their families.

We ask that such conversations are regarded as confidential.

Similarly, the work, progress and behaviour of individual children is a matter of fact for the teacher, the child and the parents of the child. Any comments made outside school about a child or an incident at school may be misinterpreted and lead to misunderstandings.

Small incidents are dealt with in school and should end there. More serious incidents will be discussed, in confidence, with parents

We feel sure you will understand the need for such confidentiality on school matters. As a student or helper in the school we ask that you respect confidentiality on such matters to avoid misunderstandings and upset.

Thank you for your co-operation!

How we are meeting these objectives:

- 1) All staff working at North Nibley School will be made aware of the contents of this policy and the implications of it for their everyday practice.
- 2) All parents will be made aware of this policy and its contents.
- 3) All external agencies working in school to deliver elements of PSHCE will be made aware of this policy and its contents. When working with the whole class or groups of children, their practice will be covered by this policy. When working with individual children or families, they will be bound by their own professional code of conduct.

This policy presented to the Governors in June 2012.