

# **Confidentiality Policy**

## **New End Primary School**

Children occasionally make personal disclosures, either in class or to individual teachers. For example, they may disclose that they or their friends or relatives are using drugs, that they are engaging in illegal activity or that they have been abused. As there are many circumstances through which teachers or other adults working at New End may come to possess sensitive information about children or their families, a school policy about confidentiality has been developed to provide guidance for teachers and other adults at New End. The following general principles should be considered.

All members of the New End School community need to be clear about the rules of confidentiality contained within this policy and contained within other school policies.

Information about children should not be passed on indiscriminately. The head teacher should be informed of any information received by any adult and that adult should also make a note of the details of the disclosure and the date and time recorded with the note.

Teachers/other adults are not able to offer children or their parent's unconditional confidentiality. If staff receives information about behaviour likely to cause harm to the child or to others, they must pass it on to the appropriate agency where relevant, following the school's child safeguarding procedures.

Teachers/other adults should make it clear to children that it is not possible to keep all information confidential and that it is sometimes necessary to tell someone else. However, the children need to know 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, action should be taken in the best interests of the child. This does not necessarily involve informing the police. Teachers and other adults are not statutorily required to inform the police about illegal drug activity, for example. New End's police liaison officer will provide guidance about specific instances.

The best interests of the child will be the main factor in whether, when and how teachers/other adults communicate information or concerns about children to their parents, but this should always be in consultation with the head teacher.

Where outside agencies and others (e.g. the school nurse, the school's education welfare officer) provide support for the PSHE and citizenship provision at New End, they will be made aware of, and abide by, the policy about disclosures and confidentiality. However, they may also have a role in providing advice and support directly to children. The boundary

between these two roles must be agreed and in any case, referral and consultation to the head teacher applies in the same way as for adults who work at New End. The distinction, in terms of right to confidentiality, will be made clear to the children. Other professions are bound by their own codes of confidentiality. For example, health professionals, such as the school nurse, are bound by the medical code of confidentiality in their work with children.

In lessons, teachers and/or teaching assistants should establish from the beginning that it is inappropriate to disclose some personal information. If a child begins to disclose information in the classroom inappropriately, then it is the responsibility of the adult leading the lesson to prevent continuation of the disclosure as quickly as possible and remind the child that such disclosures can be made later to the adult privately. It is also the responsibility of the adult to follow up such foreshortened disclosures and/or consult the head teacher, in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and policy. Children need to be clear about not putting pressure on one another to answer questions about their own experiences. This also applies to any adult in the school.

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