



Holte School

Confidentiality Policy

Lead member of staff:	A.Oliver – Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion)
Legislation Status: (Statutory/Non-Statutory)	Statutory
Local Authority Model Policy or School Written Policy:	School Written Policy
Required on school website:	Yes
Revision Date:	May 2023
Date Ratified By Full Governing Body:	June 2023
Signed By Chair Of Governors: Ms C Hardy	C Hardy

Confidentiality Policy

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Dissemination

This policy will be shared with all interested parties both in the school and in the wider community and will apply to all staff, visitors and volunteers to the school except where they are working explicitly under their own professional guidelines. The school will only in exceptional circumstances handle information without parental knowledge.

Rationale

At Holte School we wish to create an atmosphere where pupils feel able to speak to staff. In order to support staff, pupils, visitors and volunteers it is important to have a clear and explicit policy on confidentiality so that all parties involved are aware of the boundaries and legal frameworks to which they have to adhere. The school at all times puts the safety and welfare of the child first and any issue will be referred to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if necessary. This policy is in effect for all situations inside and outside of the classroom. It will underpin other school policies such as the SRE (Sex and Relationship) and Drug Education policies.

At Holte School we are committed to creating a safe and inspiring place for all children to learn and develop, where children's rights are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive as individuals and as a community. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is at the heart of our ethos and our curriculum.

The four guiding principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the child state that:

- All children are entitled to the same rights without discrimination of any kind.
- All actions concerning children will take into account the best interests of the individual child or group of children as the primary consideration.
- All children have the right to survival and development.
- Children have the right to express their views in all matters affecting them.

Holte School is committed to the guiding principles of the Convention and is actively committed to promoting all articles of the convention in all areas of the school and its work. The following articles are protected and promoted through this policy – articles 3, 12 and 16.

Definition of Confidentiality

For the purpose of this policy the following definition of confidentiality will apply:

“discretion in keeping private information”.

Staff, visitors and volunteers responsibilities.

All people working with children or young people in this school will:

- Have the best interest of the pupil at heart at all times,
- Use distancing techniques and ground rules in lessons in order to try to avoid situations that may encourage disclosures,

- At the outset inform pupils that they cannot offer complete confidentiality in certain circumstances,
- Inform any pupil wishing to make a disclosure, or who has inadvertently made a disclosure, that they may have to share the information with another member of staff and as far as possible tell the pupil the name of the person with whom they will share the information,
- At all times abide by the school's child protection policy,
- Encourage pupils where appropriate to talk with parents and carers,
- Be duty bound to act appropriately upon information not directly given to them.

Principles for referral

1. There is a statutory duty to report child protection issues.
2. If in doubt, staff or visitors should report their concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy DSL's.
3. Visitors to the school are made aware of who the DSL is when they arrive at the school.

Principles of working with pupils

1. It will be made clear to pupils the limits of confidentiality that they can be offered.
2. If confidence is to be broken, the pupil will be told first.
3. Pupils will be told with whom the information will be shared.
4. Pupils will be encouraged where appropriate to talk with parents or carers about their issues.

Ground Rules

In order to create the right sort of learning environment and to help safeguard people's rights to confidentiality it is best to establish a clear set of ground rules to work within whilst in the classroom. Ground rules will enable sensitive or controversial issues to be explored in a way that can minimise the risks of inappropriate disclosures being made.

When initially setting out to formulate some ground rules for a group the overriding question that needs to be asked is:

“What do we need to do to create a safe environment for everyone to work in and what behaviour will show this?”

As adults we are usually aware of the standards and behaviour required to fulfil the requirements of agreed ground rules. This may not be the case for all pupils and it is important to spend some time to talk about how we demonstrate respect, honesty, trust, empathy, encouragement and value. Pupils, staff and visitors need to be clear about what is meant by confidentiality and its limits within a school.

A set of ground rules will help teachers create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils.

Examples of ground rules include:

- Value everyone's contribution
- Don't feel pressurised to contribute
- If you wish to contribute do not use other people's experiences as an example
- Keep a sense of humour – laugh with someone not at them
- Listen to views and opinions
- No-one will have to answer a personal question
- Make sure you will be aware of what you are saying and its possible implications
- No-one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
- Not everyone is the same and shouldn't try to be the same.

Other areas of concern

If a member of staff, visitor or volunteer becomes aware of concerns about a member of staff they can consult Mr Oliver (Deputy Headteacher - Inclusion) if confidentiality is needed so long as the concern is NOT related to child protection. Any matter involving a child protection allegation against a member of staff MUST be reported directly to the Headteacher as per the guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023).