



Confidentiality Parents and Children Policy March 2014

The process of policy writing involved consultation between the Headteacher, representatives of teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, parents and pupils.

1. Aims

Yohden Primary School aim to:

- Provide clear advice and guidance on the rules of confidentiality for pupils, staff, parents/carers, and visitors;
- Encourage young people to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems;
- Give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues;
- Put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment;
- Seek to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda;
- Address the issues which may arise about confidentiality.

2. Rationale

This policy was developed in response to: *DfES Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (July 2000)*, *the Drugs Guidance for schools (2004)* and the *National Healthy School Status - A Guide for Schools (August 2005)* who all advise that schools should have a clear, explicit confidentiality policy which should be well advertised to the school community. This confidentiality policy gives clarity to parents, pupils, staff and visitors about levels of confidentiality that can be offered in different circumstances. It also ensures good practice throughout the school which staff, (including staff from external agencies), parents and pupils can easily understand.

3. Objectives

Yohden Primary School's objectives are:

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality, policy and procedures.
- To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
- To encourage pupils to talk to their parents and carers.
- To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
- To ensure that if there is a child protection issue then the correct procedure is followed.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To understand that health professionals are bound by a different code of conduct.
- To ensure that parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for.
- Pupils should be made aware of the specialist confidential services that may be available on the school site or in the school community e.g. school nurse,

- Pupils should be reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and then supported appropriately.

4. Guidelines

- Child protection procedures must be followed if any of the work with pupils leads to a disclosure which makes staff suspect that a child is a victim of abuse or is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
- All social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than key members of staff.
- When visitors or health professionals are used to help deliver aspects of the curriculum, they should also follow the school's confidentiality policy. The school that in a one-to-one situation with individual pupils, these professionals are bound by their own codes of conduct.
- Confidentiality is a whole school issue.
- Ground rules and distancing techniques should be used where sensitive issues are to be addressed.
- Staff should not put pressure on pupils to disclose personal information and should discourage fellow pupils from applying any such pressure.
- The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers; staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. The school encourages children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. A lot of data is generated in schools by these categories but individual children should not be able to be identified.
- Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet.
- Information about children will only be shared with their parents. Parents will not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time especially at parents' evening. However, parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- Business in Governors' meetings relating to individual pupils or staff should be confidential at all times.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.
- The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy. Following any Curriculum monitoring, a positional statement is written which contributes to the School Development Plan.

6. Conclusion

Yohden Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff. It also needs to work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.