

## Introduction

This policy was prepared following consultation with school staff, governors and pupils.

## Definition

The overall meaning of a confidential relationship is openness and agreement about what will happen to information disclosed between two, or more, people. It may not have to take the form of total secrecy. In practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is offered. In most cases only limited confidentiality can be offered. The boundaries of confidentiality should be made clear at the beginning of the conversation.

## Aims

All members of staff working on the school site are clear about the levels of confidentiality that they can offer to the school community and expect themselves.

## Objectives

For everyone: (parents, staff, governors, students, volunteers and pupils) to understand the varying levels of confidentiality which might be offered in different circumstances.

## Links

This confidentiality policy is linked to the school's PSHE, drug education, R.E, equal opportunities, sex and relationship education, child protection and anti-bullying policies.

## Guidelines

### Confidentiality and pupils

We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about it to their parents/carers. This can result in enormous stress for the individual which impacts on their education and health. Some pupils may feel that they can turn to teachers and other staff members for support and we want to be as helpful as we can whilst recognising that there maybe some potential difficulties in being supportive. You should adhere to the following policy:

- You must be clear to pupils that you cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue.
- Pupils should be aware that the school follows the child protection guidelines.
- School staff can only offer confidentiality to pupils on issues that do not involve significant illegal activities. If the conversation begins to move to this kind of issue, the pupil must be warned that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- In all cases where you feel that you have to break confidentiality with the pupil, you must inform the pupil and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.
- In talking with pupils, you need to encourage them to talk to their parents/carers about the issue that may be troubling them and support in doing this should be offered where appropriate.
- Pupils should be made aware of the specialist confidential services that maybe available in the school community e.g.; school health nurse, doctor.

### **Confidentiality and staff/governors**

All staff can expect that their personal situations and health will remain confidential unless it impinges on their terms of contract or endangers pupils or other members of staff.

#### **Governors:**

Governors need to exercise complete confidentiality especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils and parents.

### **Confidentiality and families**

We recognise that sometimes there may be family issues which might affect a pupil and which the family will only disclose to us if they can be sure the information will be treated confidentially. We will respect the wishes of the family and where it is felt necessary to share the information given to us, this will be discussed with the parents first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and/or there is an overriding child protection concern.

### **Confidentiality and visitors**

A 'visitor' in this context is any person who works in school either in a paid or a voluntary capacity. In some instances, the visitor may become privy to personal information regarding pupils, parents and staff that is of a confidential nature.

There is an agreement between the Governing Body and everyone who works in school to sign a declaration not to use any such information outside the school context and to share relevant information with other agencies in situations of child protection. (See Appendix A)

### **Lines of Responsibility and Referral**

If a member of the school community receives information where they believe a child protection issue is addressed, they should refer the case to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Mrs Helen Webb). The person must make it clear to the pupil that they will be passing on the information but that the information will remain confidential, between them and the designated teacher. If confidentiality has to be broken, the child must be informed first.

A teacher does not have a general duty to inform the headteacher and other staff of disclosures by a pupil. The decision as to whether to do so must be a matter for a teacher's discretion, having regard for child protection issues, unless the headteacher issues an instruction that they should be informed, in which case the teacher must comply.

### **Use of Social Media**

In addition to this section please refer to our Social Media Policy

Information which relates to any individual stakeholder or brings our school into disrepute will never be posted or shared online, through any means including all areas of social media, eg Facebook, Twitter.

Staff Members or service providers for the school must not identify themselves as employees of Colwall C of E Primary School in their personal web space. I.e. Do not state your place of work as Colwall Primary School. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with the school and to safeguard the privacy of staff members, particularly those involved in providing sensitive frontline services.

**APPENDIX A**

**CODE OF CONDUCT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**  
**FOR VISITORS/STAFF/STUDENTS/GOVERNORS OF**  
**COLWALL C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**All members of staff, governors, regular visitors and volunteers are required to sign the following statement relating to confidentiality.**

- I have read and understood the Confidentiality Policy and agree to adhere to this in my role at Colwall C of E Primary School, during my time at the school and after I have left.
- I recognise that I am in a position whereby, at certain times, I may have access to information concerning individual stakeholders.
- I agree to only discuss information relating to Colwall C of E Primary School and its stakeholders on a “need to know” basis, as defined in the policy.
- I agree not to post or share information online through any means, including all areas of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc), which relates to any individual stakeholder.
- I agree to refer all requests for information by an outside agency or the media to the Headteacher.
- I agree to adhere to the Code of Conduct for visitors, staff and/or governors

Name	Role in school:
Signed	Date

Those working in school either paid or voluntarily will be asked to sign the agreement each academic year.

Last reviewed January 2022

Headteacher



Chair of Personnel Committee *Ruth Whitehouse* 02.02.2022

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: January 2024