



## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Date: March 2022

Review Date: March 2023

### Aims:

- To give clear guidance to all members of the school community about confidentiality
- To encourage the pupils to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems

It is our intention to respect the privacy of Governors, staff, pupils and their parents.

At Sarum Hall School we believe that:

- The safety, well-being and protection of our pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at Sarum Hall School make about confidentiality.
- The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' well-being and safety.
- It is an essential part of the ethos of our school that trust is established to enable pupils, staff and parents/carers to seek help both within and outside the school.
- The number of situations where personal information is shared is kept to a minimum.
- Information is stored securely and disposed of appropriately.
- Pupils, parents and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns.
- The school's attitude to confidentiality is open and easily understood and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school.
- Information about the school and its internal workings should not be shared with outside agencies without the knowledge and consent of the Head.
- Everyone in the school community needs to know that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.

All schools are asked on occasions to keep information confidential. This can relate to a variety of issues. It is important that the whole school follows the same clear and explicit policy. Governors, teachers (including peripatetic), school staff, pupils, parents and carers should be made aware of this and how it works in practice.

The confidentiality policy will be included on the school website.

### In lessons:

- Ground rules 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

## Personal disclosures:

Disclosures from pupils may take place at an inappropriate place or time. If this happens, the member of staff should talk again individually to the pupil as soon as is practicably possible. Any matters of pupil safety or safeguarding must be reported to the designated senior lead of safeguarding (DSL).

## Key Points

- Pupils should know that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- Pupils should be informed of sources of help, for example, the Health & Wellbeing Coordinator, GP, NSPCC or Childline.
- Any personal information relating to staff should be regarded as private and not passed on indiscriminately, for example:
  - Salaries
  - Employment status and issues
  - Contractual terms and conditions
  - Health matters including pregnancy
  - Family circumstances
- Governors, staff, pupils, and parents have the right to enjoy privacy from gossip.
- Pupils and adults will have disciplinary matters dealt with according to the school's own procedures and out of the eye of the wider school community, hence it is important that:
- Staff do not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff meetings to any person without direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.
- No member of staff discusses an individual child's behaviour or learning in the presence of another child in school.
- Staff do not enter into discussion about a child's behaviour or learning with other children or their parents.
- Governors do not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to any person outside of meetings.
- At Governors' meetings, matters such as pupil suspension and exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be communicated within the Headmistress' Report. This is not for the knowledge of persons outside the Governors' meeting.
- It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters in order to support individuals. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.
- When volunteers, such as parents and friends of the school are working in classes, on trips, or with specific children as part of the Home School Reading Partnership Programme, they do not discuss educational matters outside the school environment.
- Parents in school, working as volunteers or as part of the SHPA do not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents in the school. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy.
- Only the Head or Chair of the Board of Governors may speak to the media.

- Staff, volunteers, students and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in school.
- Staff may wish to discuss an individual pupil with a class or group, after consultation with the pupil's parents. For instance, it can support the inclusion of a child with social integration problems. A child with LDD/SEND, visual or auditory impairment can be supported if their friends understand how to offer support.

## Health professionals

Health professionals are bound by both their professional codes of conduct and school policies when working at Sarum Hall School. They will sign to say that they have read and understood Safeguarding, Child protection Policy and Code of Conduct and this Confidentiality Policy.

## Requests for confidential information

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is based on data protection principles that our school must comply with.

The principles say that personal data must be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it is processed
- Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- Kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed
- Processed in a way that ensures it is appropriately secure

There may be occasions when a request for confidential information regarding a particular pupil is made, from an individual, an agency or an organisation. The usual course of action would be to seek advice from the Head. However, there are specific circumstances where exceptions may have to be made:

1. Where the pupil has agreed to the sharing of specific, relevant information with a particular individual, agency or organisation (*although with the age group of pupils at Sarum Hall School, we would expect that final consent would be provided by parents*).
2. Where the request is part of Child Protection procedures.
3. Where information is required as part of legal proceedings.

Where information is released, this should usually be in the form of a written report, limited to relevant information only. Where possible the report should be shared with the pupil, except where doing so may compromise the safety and welfare of the pupil.

For more information, please refer to the School's **Data Protection Policy** and **Privacy Notice**, available on our website.

**Linked guidance, policies and procedures:**

- [Keeping Pupils Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) statutory guidance](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

**Relevant school policies:**

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Whistleblowing
- Data Protection Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Privacy Notice – Pupils, Parents, Carers & Guardians
- Staff Privacy Notice