



4.10 Policy for Confidentiality

(EYFS & KS1-3)

Reviewer responsible: Head	Date of last review: 10/22
Reviewed by: SK NB	Date of next review: 09/24
Authorised by Chair: AH	

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Notting Hill Prep has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents 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.

Aims

- To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents and staff.
- To put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment.
- To commit to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility of using, holding and safeguarding information received.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To recognise that sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust.
- To ensure that the whole school community understands that it is held in a position of trust by parents and children and that there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality.

Objectives

- To provide consistent messages in school concerning the handling of information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust with 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 children to talk to their parents.
- To ensure that pupils and parents know that the school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all, including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender, disability and special educational needs.
- To ensure that if there are child protection issues the correct procedure is followed (see **Safeguarding & Child Protection** policy).
- 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.

School procedures

- The school community actively promotes a positive ethos of respect for the individual.
- There is one Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is also the Deputy Head Pastoral and three Deputy DSLs: The Head of Lower School (OB), The Head of Middle School (JCB) & Upper School (PGB).
- There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents (see **Safeguarding & Child Protection** policy) and all staff have regular updates and in-house training on child protection and safeguarding issues.
- There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse (see **Managing Allegations Against Staff** policy).

Notting Hill Preparatory Policy for Confidentiality

- The school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and has a duty to report child protection issues.
- Parents and children should feel reassured that only in exceptional circumstances would confidentiality be broken.
- Parents are reminded of their duty of care when taking photographs or videos at school events and are requested to sign a disclaimer when they join the school that such material would only be used for private viewing and would not be passed to any third party (outside the family) or used in any publication or other way that may threaten the safety and security of the children involved. They are also asked to sign a permission slip for their children to be photographed taking part in school activities.
- Parents of children in Reception are reminded that photographs **MUST NOT** be taken of EYFS children. This requirement is displayed in posters positioned prominently around the EYFS area of the school.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.
- Ground rules must be set for any classroom work (e.g. circle time and other PSHE/P4C sessions) dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs, making it clear to pupils that personal questions or disclosures are inappropriate in classroom lessons.
- Pupils are dissuaded from exerting pressure on anyone to answer personal questions
- When situations and issues are discussed, depersonalisation techniques are used (e.g. collecting group ideas, using case studies) so that issues can be explored without personal information being disclosed.
- Parents would be informed of any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities, except in a case where disclosure may put a child in danger.
- The school prides itself on good communication with parents, and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents about issues that may cause concern.

Guidance for staff

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis.
- All staff, as of September 2016, must sign a confidentiality agreement form before participating in classroom and playground activities (**Appendix 1**). This includes any volunteers (including parents) working in school. This is to ensure that confidentiality is maintained in respect of the children's attainments, attitudes and behaviour.
- 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 school staff.
- Staff must be aware that effective sex and relationship education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, could lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
- Staff need to be aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
- Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture, disability or sexuality is unacceptable (see **2.5 Policy for Education for Ethnic Diversity**).
- Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known, it should not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.
- Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and the class information sheet should be available to all staff on the notice board closest to the Form Teacher's desk in each classroom, but folded over so that it is not on view to other children or parents, thereby maintaining confidentiality.

Notting Hill Preparatory Policy for Confidentiality

- Photographs and videos of children should not be taken by members of staff on their mobile phones (only school tablets and cameras to be used) and photographs should only be used with parents' permission, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified, other than in school publications, such as the school magazine. Names are not included on the website.
- Information about children may be shared with the child's parents, but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks or progress grades at any time, especially at parents' evenings. However, parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- All personal information about children, including social services records, should be regarded as confidential and should be stored in a confidential file.
- Information regarding health reports, such as speech therapy, medical reports, educational psychologists' reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports which may be circulated should, once read, be securely filed.
- Much information and data is generated about pupils and it is important that in all notes, briefingsheets etc. for a general meeting outside the confines of the school, a child should not be able to be identified.

School office

- Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each log available for viewing by the parent of that child only.
- Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will be available internally and, with parents' consent, in a form list for use by the form representative and the parents of that form. Details will otherwise not be passed on without permission except in exceptional circumstances (such as the police) or to a receiving school.

Contractual confidentiality

In the course of their employment staff have access to, and are entrusted with, confidential information relating to the School, its pupils, their parents, families, carers and their private affairs. Members of staff must not divulge, either during or after their period of employment, any information likely to be considered confidential and all notes or other information, either electronic or written, which they may acquire or make during their period of employment, remain the property of the School and must be surrendered on termination of employment.

Responsibility of Governors and Directors

Governors and Directors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. Any confidential written reports should be marked 'confidential – to be destroyed after meeting'. Any documents sent by email must also be clearly marked 'confidential – to be destroyed after meeting'. Governors must observe complete confidentiality about matters discussed by the Board of Governors, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.

Although decisions reached at Governors' meetings are normally made public through minutes or otherwise, the discussion on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the Boardroom.

Confidentiality Agreement Form

As a member of staff or volunteer at Notting Hill Prep it is important that you are aware of essential safeguarding procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at NHP is **Harriet Fryer**. The Deputy DSLs are **Sophie Kingshott** (DDSL OB, Acting Head of Lower School), **Peter Whitmell** (DDSL JCB, Head of Middle and Upper School), **Ellen Kirby** (DDSL PGB, Assistant Head of Upper School) and **Joanna Skeoch** (DDSL JCB, Assistant Head of Middle School). Please inform the DSL or one of the DDSLs immediately if you have any Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns.

If you are a member of staff or volunteering in school on a regular basis (more than 3 days in a month) you must attend a formal safeguarding induction with the DSL or DDSL before you start.

The Agreement

This confidentiality agreement applies to all persons working directly/indirectly with children at Notting Hill Prep School.

The Terms of Agreement

- All information I might hear or read in school regarding a child, or their family must be kept confidential
- I will notify the Form Teacher or a member of the Senior Management Team if I have any concerns regarding this information, or indeed the manner in which it has been disclosed
- I will not post any information regarding children, parents or staff on social networking sites
- I will contact the DSL or a DDSL if I have any safeguarding or child protection concerns
- I understand that, where appropriate, my sessions should actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these.
- I understand that it is the School's intention for all who study and work at the School, regardless of their age, race, social and cultural background, linguistic background, gender, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), religious views and beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, political views or trade union membership to have equality of opportunity.

Signature: _____

Date _____

Print name: _____