

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

This policy applies to all staff at PromisedLand Academy

Aim

To have a comprehensive confidentiality policy which gives clarity to parents/carers, pupils and staff about levels of confidentiality that can be offered by the school in different circumstances.

Why the policy was developed

The issue of confidentiality in schools is becoming increasingly complex as the integration of human rights legislation develops.

Staff support and training

Information regarding the confidentiality policy will form part of all new staff's induction training.

Confidentiality between All School Staff Members and Students

See Appendix 1

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 Supervisors and other staff members for support and we want to be as helpful as we can, whilst recognising that there may be some potential difficulties in being supportive.

All school staff members should adhere to the following policy:

- When talking with pupils, it is important for you to be aware of maintaining your professional boundaries.
- 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 warned that if there is a child protection issue where the pupil, or others, is likely to be at risk of significant harm, you are under a duty to inform the school's Head teacher who may have to involve other agencies. It is important that each member of staff deals with the matter at hand sensitively and explains to the pupil that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but that they will only tell those who need to know in order to help.
- In all cases where you feel that you have to break confidentiality with the pupil, you must inform the pupil, (unless there is a good reason not to inform them e.g. risk of harm) 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, unless doing so places them at risk, and support in doing this should be offered where appropriate.

Parents/Carers and Families

We recognise that sometimes there may be family issues which may 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/carers first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk or there is an overriding child protection concern.

See Appendix 2

Staff and the School Leadership Team

All staff can normally expect that their personal situations and health will remain confidential unless:

- It endangers pupils or other members of staff or
- There is a legal obligation to disclose such information or
- Despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

Linked Policies

The following policies are linked and supported by the confidentiality policy:

- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Health and Safety

Dissemination

This policy is publicised to all in the school community:

- Through access to the school policy file
- Staff training and induction
- Through occasional assemblies/ circle time discussions as appropriate – by emphasising links to the school's anti-bullying policy and child protection policy and procedures

“A Good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Psalm: 112:5

Policy Last Reviewed on: _____August 2020_____

Policy Due for Review on: _____May 2021_____

APPENDIX 1: Statement for Pupils Concerning Confidentiality

We understand that there may be times when things may be worrying you but which you cannot discuss with your family. Supervisors and other members of school staff will do all that we can to help, but you must be aware of the following:

- If you really want to talk to someone confidentially, (without anyone else knowing what you have said) you can speak to any adult that you trust and know. This will most likely be your class teacher or your teaching assistant. The Head teacher/ Principal are always happy to listen to you and hear your worries.
- The Supervisors and other members of staff in the school will often be able to help you with many of the things that may be worrying you, but they cannot promise to keep everything to themselves. For example, if you tell them about an issue like someone stealing, they will have to speak to the Head Teacher, who may inform your parents.
- If the staff member feels that they have to tell someone else what you have talked about, they will normally tell you first and help you to sort out suitable solution, perhaps advising you on speaking to your parents/carers - if you want to do this.
- Very rarely there are things which you talk about that can be very dangerous for you or for other young people, for example someone is trying to harm you. The Staff member may have to tell someone else about what you have said in order to keep you safe, but they will normally tell you first before making these arrangements and always help you to sort things out.

APPENDIX 2 Statement for Parents and Carers Concerning Confidentiality and Pupils

There is increasing national concern for the emotional health and well-being of young people growing up in today's society. We recognise that parents and carers want to do all they can to support their child, however even the most supportive of relationships - where there is excellent communication between parent/carer and child, occasions can arise when the child can become worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about it with you. This may result in enormous amounts of stress, which can impact their education, health and behavior; unfortunately, self-harm and even suicide in the most extreme cases. Whilst we recognise that parents and carers will naturally be disappointed if their child does not choose to talk with you about what is troubling them, we feel there could be even more distress if the pupil is unable to cope with the issue themselves. On this basis we have agreed the following concerning the school staff:

- Our staff will be supportive to pupils who approach them with concerns but will make it clear that they cannot offer confidentiality to the pupil on anything that involves an illegal activity or anything that is a potential child protection issue where the pupil or others are likely to be at risk of significant harm.
- Senior staff in the school will liaise with parents/carers as appropriate in any case where a staff member has reported an issue over which they cannot offer confidentiality.
- Staff will support pupils to inform their parents/carers about issues that are troubling them as appropriate.