

Hightown Junior Infant and Nursery School

At Hightown we work together as a school community with pride, respect, rigour and fairness. We celebrate effort, respond enthusiastically to challenges and create positive opportunities that enable everyone to achieve in every way.

Confidentiality policy

Policy date:	January 2024	
Approved by & date	Full Governing Body	January 2024
Link school staff:	Russell Ingleby	
Link governor:	Rick Niland	
Next review date	September 2026	

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. The school respects everyone's right to privacy. Everyone in the school is expected to work within the guidelines of this policy.

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 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 PSHCE, drug education, R.E, equal opportunities, sex and relationship education, safeguarding and antibullying 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 Kirklees Safeguarding 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 may be 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.

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. Visitors should ensure that any information they become aware of regarding pupils in the school needs to remain confidential but there will be a need to share relevant information with other agencies in situations of child protection.

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 Leader (DSL). 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 DSL. 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.