



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Also see: Visitor Guidance

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

1. The Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
2. The ICT Acceptable Usage Policy
3. The Social Media Policy
4. The Data Protection Policy

Formulation date:	March 2014	Reviewing Committee	Curriculum & Standards
Approved on:		Next Review date:	March 2018

Introduction

Duty of Confidentiality

All staff have a duty of confidentiality and other adults should be reminded of it when they are invited to visit the school.

The duty is set out in contracts of employment. Breach of confidentiality can lead to damaged morale, bring the school into disrepute and at worst can seriously affect the lives of others and lead to legal action.

By the very nature of some lessons and student support circumstances, students may hope for or even expect what they say to remain confidential.

This is usually possible, but of course child safety and child protection must come first in every circumstance.

Aims

- To give absolutely clear guidance to staff and visitors.
- To encourage young people to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems.
- To give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues.
- To give teachers confidence to teach subjects where confidentiality may be sought or child protection issues are more likely to be disclosed e.g. PSHE.

Whole School Confidentiality

All school employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner mindful of confidentiality principles. This includes written and oral communication.

Staff/staff verbal communications are included in the confidentiality policy principles. Conversations between members of staff that concern information of a confidential or sensitive nature should be carried out in private.

It is the duty of the staff concerned to ensure that the information is passed on only to those who need to know it.

All school employees should refer to the Employee Code of Conduct for further guidance.

NB Parents can request to view student files held. Notice must be given and other students' names blanked out before hand over.

In Lessons

This guidance is particularly pertinent to lessons and units of work where sensitive issues may be raised e.g. relationships and sex education, PSHE and RE.

Before starting lessons, the teacher should prepare the class for sensitive work by setting ground rules and demanding high expectations of behaviour, use of correct vocabulary and a serious/mature attitude.

Children should be told that the right classroom atmosphere will be strictly upheld and that their best interests will be maintained.

Students should be clearly told that they should try not to tell personal stories and should certainly not use names in whole class discussions. Although the class ground rules will encourage other students not to talk about such things later to others, this cannot be realistically expected.

Students should be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer about problems and concerns. They should be told where they can go to for professional advice and that a number of people who have a health service role can give them confidential advice (see below for this list).

Students should be told that a member of Newbridge staff can not guarantee to keep everything that they tell them confidential because if the matter affects their safety, the member of staff has to speak to the designated person responsible for child protection.

(See Appendix 1)

Where students can go for more confidential advice (Health Professionals operate to Fraser guidelines):

- Counselling service
- School Nurse (Ask Pastoral Managers for an appointment)
- Personal Advisor (Careers) (Ask Mrs Warren for an appointment)
- Youth Club's young person advice service (Visit youth club and talk to any worker)
- The young person's GP (family doctor)
- Resource area in the library gives places, phone numbers and web-sites
- The Health/Citizenship/Careers page on the CRL gives phone numbers and web-sites
- Childline and Samaritans posters around school provide numbers
- Helplines published in the Pupil Planner

Disclosure

Disclosure means sharing private/personal information. The term does not just refer to child protection issues.

- Staff should not put students under pressure to disclose, but neither should stop students talking
- Staff should not encourage students to disclose but they should be reassured that they will be supported and that all staff know what to do next.
- If a child makes a disclosure that does not affect their safety, staff should listen, ask the student what they would like to do next and signpost them to other places and people where they can get more advice, such as the Pastoral Office, their Tutor, their Pastoral Manager. Also they can be encouraged to seek information from the library. They should be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer/family.
- If a child makes a disclosure that is a child safeguarding/child protection issue or the member of staff is not sure whether it might be or not, they should:

1. Reassure the child that they will be supported
2. Not ask questions or respond in any way that asks for more information
3. Tell the child that they will now be passing the information on to the designated member of staff for child protection/safeguarding
4. ASAP write an accurate report stating what was said
5. ASAP report to the designated member of staff for child protection and hand over the written report (dated and signed)
6. Not relay the matter to anyone else
7. Staff may seek advice and support for themselves from the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher.

Visitors to Lessons (including volunteers)

Staff inviting visitors into their lessons should ask them to operate to this confidentiality policy.

Health and childcare professionals are bound by their own professional codes to maintain confidentiality when giving 1:1 advice, but in a classroom situation should follow the Newbridge policy.

Visitors should be asked to look at the “Visitors Guidance” document on the school web site.

Visitors should be told not to discuss another child or their behaviour in the presence of another child or their parents.

Student Support

The way in which Student Support operates creates a quiet, trusting atmosphere where disclosure is possibly more likely. Staff should ensure that they have at least two students with them, preferably three or four.

Equal Opportunities

Staff may wish to discuss an individual’s circumstances with a class or group. For example it can support a child with Autism or visual impairment if their class is aware of their challenges. In such cases experienced staff should prepare the class sensitively and only after acquiring the full support of the child and their parent/carer.

Governors

Governors should follow this policy when visiting the school and should read “Visitor Guidance” on the school website.

Governors must not divulge details about individuals (staff, children or families) to any person outside their meetings.

Governors should keep details and knowledge of personnel and student issues dealt with in meetings and the Headteacher's report confidential. These details are not needed outside the meetings and personal details will not be published in minutes.

Performance Management

Performance management meetings should be carried out in private.

Paperwork recording objective, review and lesson observation details will be held with the individual, the reviewer and the Headteacher only (using BlueSky)

Documentation (written and electronic)

Any documentation of a sensitive nature needs to be recorded and passed to the appropriate person only. Recording this information can be done either by hand or electronically.

The recording of the information should take place in private. Once recorded, the information should be passed to the appropriate person without delay. No additional copies of the information should be made.

If the information is being written electronically, and the information has to be retained by the writer, then the following safeguards must be used:

- 1) Sensitive information must not be stored in a public area of the school's computer network. It should be retained in the "my documents" area of the writer, and password protected.
- 2) If information has been written on a home computer, the document must not be stored on that machine, for any longer than it takes to transfer by e-mail or transfer to password protected memory stick.
- 3) Staff are responsible for the safe keeping of all removable data storage e.g. memory stick. Password protection is needed for any sensitive information stored. The data should be removed at the earliest opportunity.
- 4) If information is being sent via e-mail, no blind copies (bcc) should be included. The report should still be written in a word processed and password protected document that is then attached to the e-mail, rather than being written in the body of the e-mail text itself.
- 5) Once the appropriate recipient has received the information, they should inform the original author to delete all copies that they may have retained and remove any e-mails from the "sent mail" folder.

References/Links

Relationships and Sex Policy

Drugs and Drug Related incidents Policy

Visitors Guidance

Data Protection Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Employer Code of Conduct

Education Act 2002 Section 175

DCSF Child Protection circular 10/95 "Protecting Children from Abuse"

Joint DCSF and DH guidance "Working together to safeguard Children"

LSCB Procedures Chapter 13 (www.lscb-llf.org.uk)

LCC circular GDS/IK/CK Sept 2009 "Social Networking sites and confidentiality"

Social Media Policy

Ratification and Review of Policy

Consultation	All staff invited to contribute/Healthy schools/Youth Team/School nurse/SLT/Parents and students through Newbridge News
Governors Responsible	Curriculum and Standards Committee and Whole
Distribution	Maxine Adams and Judi Warren
	To all staff following ratification/held in office & staffroom
	Summarised on web-site/in the prospectus
Review	Four year cycle

Appendix (1)**Wording used in lessons in Health and Citizenship Education**

We understand that there may be times when there are things which may be worrying you, but you feel that you cannot talk about them with your family. Teachers and other members of school staff will do all we can to help you, but you need to know the following:

- if you really want to talk to someone confidentially (without anyone else knowing what you have said), you can speak to the school counsellor, school nurse or the Careers personal adviser. We might also be able to help you find someone else outside of school if you think this is better for you
- the teachers 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. If you tell them about some things like selling drugs or stealing, they will have to speak to one of the senior teachers in the school who might then have to speak to your parents/carers, the police or social services
- if the staff member feels that they have to tell someone else what you have talked about, they will always tell you first and help you sort it out, perhaps helping you to speak to your parents/carers if you want this
- very rarely, there may be things which you talk about that can be very dangerous for you or for other young people, e.g.: someone trying to harm you. Even the school counsellor, nurse or Careers personal adviser may have to tell someone else about what you have said, but they will tell you first and always help you to sort things out
- please remember if the school nurse or Careers personal adviser is speaking in lessons, they have to tell things to senior teachers in the school, just like the teachers. The only time they can be confidential is when they see you outside of lessons.