



## **OAKLEY INFANT SCHOOL** **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

*Thrive, strive and achieve together.*

### **1. Introduction**

The Staff and Governors at Oakley Infant School are conscious that a clear, explicit and well publicised confidentiality policy ensures good practice throughout the school which staff (including those from external agencies) parents/carers and pupils can easily understand. The policy should confirm that all members of the school community are clear about the levels of confidentiality that they can offer to other members of the community and expect themselves.

The policy was developed through discussion by the whole staff team and members of the Governing Body during a whole school training session and updated in line with recent changes in safeguarding and child protection and data protection legislation.

### **2. Aims**

We aim to:

- be transparent about the process for developing and reviewing this policy.
- for everyone to understand the varying levels of confidentiality which might be offered in different circumstances.

### **3. Policy into Practice**

- The school needs to be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities e.g. Child Protection/ Safeguarding procedures.
- Different professionals can offer varying levels of confidentiality in different circumstances which can confuse staff and pupils.
- Sometimes parents/carers and families may wish to disclose information confidentially to the school. Schools need to be clear about their position.

The policy has been developed with reference to documents concerning confidentiality. These include:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025)
- Working together to Safeguard Children (DfE Update- July 2022)
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education- Sept 2021
- National Healthy School Status- A Guide for Schools- [www.healthyschools.org.uk](http://www.healthyschools.org.uk)
- Information Sharing and Confidentiality Policy (Hampshire - HCC 2010)
- Information *Sharing: Advice for safeguarding practitioners* (DfE 2018)

### **4. Where and to whom the policy applies.**

The policy applies to:

- All teaching and non-teaching members of staff working in the school.
- Governors
- Visiting staff from external agencies
- Parents and other volunteers working in school

### **5. Staff support and training**

Training and support will be offered to all staff in the school through

- Staff induction
- Training offered by Hampshire Children's services
- School based INSET sessions

Governors through Governor induction

Parents through Parent information leaflet and induction

## **6. POLICY**

### **All school staff members**

It is recognised 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 possible whilst recognising that there may be some potential difficulties in being supportive. Staff should adhere to the following policy:

- When talking with pupils, it is important to be aware of maintaining professional boundaries. Whilst being supportive where possible, distancing techniques should be used when appropriate and pupils encouraged or supported to access the confidential services offered on the school site.
- Staff must be clear to pupils that they 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/ safeguarding issue where the pupil, or others, are likely to be at risk of significant harm, staff are under a duty to inform the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead who may have to involve other agencies. (Please refer to the school's child protection/ safeguarding procedures for further advice on this aspect). It is important that each member of staff deals with this 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 staff feel that they have to break confidentiality with the pupil, they 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, staff 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.

All information about children and families will only be shared with staff who need to know.

### **The school ELSA**

The school has an ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) who as a result of their work with pupils can become involved in a confidential discussion. The ELSA cannot offer confidentiality over a child protection issue but sometimes it is helpful for a pupil to be able to talk about troubling issues in order to help the pupil through their situation. We do not require our ELSA to inform staff about conversations unless there is a child protection issue or other significant risk.

### **The school nurse:**

The requirement to offer a confidential service is within the professional Code of Practice for school nurses and other health service staff. The government has also signed up to international legislation and charters which entitle young people to access health services. However, health professionals like everyone else, must inform appropriate services if they become aware of a child protection/ safeguarding issue in discussions with a young person.

### **Parents/carers 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/carers first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and/or there is an overriding child protection/ safeguarding concern.

### **Staff and Governors**

All staff can normally 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 or
- there is a legal obligation to disclose such information or
- it is necessary for legal proceedings or
- despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

### **Linked Policies**

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the policies on:

- Child Protection
- Safeguarding
- RHE Policy including appendices on Sex and Relationships and Drugs education
- Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Behaviour management Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data protection Policy

### **Dissemination**

This policy will be widely publicised to all in the school community

- on the school website
- with job details to applicants
- through agreements with other agencies working on the school site,
- through assemblies and the school council
- by emphasising links to the to the school's anti-bullying policy and child protection/ safeguarding policy and procedures.
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The policy is written in such a way as to be accessible to pupils, teachers, parents/carers and the wider community.

### **4. Monitoring and evaluation**

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor the effectiveness of the Confidentiality Policy through the school Self Evaluation procedures.

Reviewed and updated by Resources Committee  
Review date

1 Oct 2025  
Autumn 2026