

Langley School

Confidentiality Policy

Introduction

Due to the nature of our work at Langley School, we will experience many situations in which confidentiality is of great importance. This policy aims to clarify issues around confidentiality. It also is a vital part of meeting the welfare needs of our children, as outlined in the Education Act 2000.

Disclosures from pupils

Pupils may make disclosures to members of staff. If this happens at an inappropriate time or place, the member of staff should speak to the child again before the end of the school day. The member of staff may then be able to discuss the situation with a colleague without naming the child but this may not be possible. Although it is the responsibility of the member of staff to reassure the child that their best interests will be maintained, the member of staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. If confidentiality has to be broken, where appropriate, the child should be informed first and then subsequent support should be provided. Some disclosures may become a child protection issue.

Child protection issues

It may be necessary to share some information about confidential child protection issues; adults who work closely with the child will be informed where there is a need to share information. Other staff, including bus guides and dinner supervisors may be given information to help them with their day to day work with the child. This may be quite explicit, for example where there is a risk that the child may be snatched, or more general, for example keeping an eye on the child because of an upset at home. When there is a need to share information, especially when it is sensitive, there should be consideration of when and how to tell staff.

Home visits

When making a home visit, all findings should be treated as confidential.

Health professionals

Health professionals are bound by their own professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality. Whilst they are working in Langley School with our pupils, they are also bound by this confidentiality policy. They should seek to prevent inappropriate personal disclosures by using distancing techniques and establishing ground rules.

Parents and carers

It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that schools should be in a position of handling information without informing parents and carers. In other circumstances (and where appropriate), children should be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers and support could be offered to facilitate this.

Students on placement

During their initial visits, all students are made aware of the vulnerability of the children we work with and the confidential information they may hear about them. All students are verbally requested to ensure that such information stays within school. Where there is a breach of confidentiality, the matter will be dealt with in school in the first instance. If the student is no longer on placement, the college will be contacted.

CRB checks

All staff and volunteers should have a CRB check, as outlined in the Protection of Children Act 1999. The findings of these should remain confidential within school but concerns may be passed on to other organisations, for example the police, when there is risk to the children.

Data

The school will comply with:

- the terms of the 1998 Data Protection Act, and any subsequent relevant legislation, to ensure personal data is treated in a manner that is fair and lawful;
- Birmingham Education Service advice and guidance supplied in the 'Data Protection Advice for Schools' flyer and 'Data Protection Guidance for Schools' booklet;
- Information and guidance displayed on the Information Commissioner's website (www.dataprotection.gov.uk).

All personal data relating to staff, pupils or other people with whom we have contact, whether held on computer or in paper files, are covered by the Act. Personal data will only be disclosed to organisations or individuals with consent, or organisations that have a legal right to receive the data without consent. Personal information about children and families is subject to a legal duty of confidence and should not normally be disclosed without the consent of the subject. Children are entitled to the same duty of confidence as adults provided that they can understand their choices and the consequences.

Links to other policies

This policy has explicit links with our Child Protection and Sex Education policies, both of which support the content of this policy.

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