



Boroughbridge High School and King James's School Federation

POLICY STATEMENT

Confidentiality Policy (Relating To Pupils)

Policy last reviewed (date)	November 2024
Ratified by Governors (date)	November 2024
Next policy review due (date)	November 2027
Due for review by Governors (date)	November 2027
Staff Lead	Assistant Headteacher - DSL

MISSION STATEMENT:

This policy will support the school by being reflective of the Governors' direction and School's development plan. It will be used in an efficient and effective manner by ensuring provision of clear guidance for those who have received disclosure of sensitive and private information from a pupil or about a pupil/young person.

Significant revisions since the last review:

Updated to Federation policy.

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Section 1: Introduction

Pupils/young people may occasionally choose to disclose sensitive and private information to a trusted adult within their school setting; this Policy aims to provide clear guidance for those who have received such information from a pupil or about a pupil/young person.

King James's School shall ensure:

- Absolute clarity about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities - teachers and support staff can neither offer nor guarantee absolute confidentiality.
- that pupils are reassured that when confidentiality has to be breached, they will be informed and supported appropriately. Very often young people who disclose such information recognise that it is for their own benefit that it should be passed on.
- that pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers and support will be offered to do so if appropriate.
- that it is only in exceptional circumstances (where it is suspected the child/young person is / may be at risk of significant harm if information is shared) that school will require to handle information without parental knowledge.
- that all staff are advised that they should take note of this policy. It will be available to parents and should also be made known to students.
- that it is made clear to staff the school's expectation that they read guidance for safer working practice as a part of their understanding of confidentiality and wider safeguarding practices.
- that the teacher understands that that they should approach the designated safeguarding lead (dsl) in the first instance who will make sensitive arrangements, in discussion with the pupil, to ensure that parents/carers are informed, and that help is provided for the pupil and family.

This Confidentiality Policy ensures that:

- information about pupils' private lives and family backgrounds will only be shared on a need-to-know basis
- pupils' rights and best interests are protected, whilst taking into account the sensitivities of parents/carers
- any action taken in the light of information gained about pupils is within the law.

Section 2: Child Protection

The school Child Protection Policy is adapted from the LA policy and is available to all staff on Its Learning and to all parents on the school website. Visitors working with students should be made aware of this policy.

All staff should be alert to signs of abuse and report their suspicions and concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Child Protection Policy will be followed.

Regular training and updates will be provided to all staff regarding Child Protection.

Section 3: Confidentiality

Confidential situations occur both in and outside the classroom, such as disclosure that they are engaging in underage sexual activity, that they, or friends, or relatives are using drugs, or that they have been abused or neglected.

This Policy is in place to ensure that young people are protected by law and that there is an established climate of trust. Pupils must be reassured that their best interests will be maintained.

The confidentiality guidelines should be discussed and made clear to ensure full comprehension by pupils and staff, for example:

- We do not have to give details about our personal lives or our experiences
- We will not feel pressurised to answer a question and have the right to 'pass'
- We will not be forced into participation
- We all have the right to be listened to and have our views respected
- Bullying, teasing, harassment or any other kind of unkind behaviour will not be tolerated
- The decision to disclose information is our own to make
- There are sources of confidential help such as their GP if appropriate.

Section 4: Relationship and Sex Education

Pupils should be encouraged to look to a trusted adult – preferably to parents or carer.

The law allows professionals to see and, in some circumstances, treat young people confidentially, and part of this process includes counselling and discussion without talking to parents.

As part of PSHE, RSE and health education programmes, pupils/young people should be made aware of the law in relation to sexual activity and local confidentiality services.

When a pupil is under 16 and he/she is either contemplating, or involved in, having sexual intercourse, school should be in a position to take steps to ensure that:

- the pupil/young person is encouraged to talk to his/her parent or carer
- any child protection issues are addressed
- the pupil/young person has been informed about contraception, including precise information about where contraception and advice services can be accessed

It should be noted that underage sex or a suspected pregnancy between the ages of 13 and 15 are not necessarily in themselves safeguarding issues. A pupil's right to confidentiality in this circumstance must be observed, however, the pupil concerned should be strongly advised to talk to his/her parents/carers, and given appropriate support in doing so.

If a pupil/young person is under 13 years of age however, or there is evidence of coercion, abuse, or other worrying factors, then this IS a safeguarding issue and the appropriate process must be followed, notifying the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the first instance.

It is only in the most exceptional cases (where it is suspected the child/young person is / may be at risk of significant harm if the information is shared) that schools should be in a position of having to handle

such information without parental knowledge, and where younger pupils are involved this should be grounds for concern.

Section 5: Health Professionals

Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality they are also bound by relevant school policies. In line with best practice, they will seek to protect privacy and prevent inappropriate personal disclosures. They will discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate.