



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY CORSHAM REGIS PRIMARY ACADEMY

Date: September 2015

Next Review Date: September 2017

Member of staff responsible: Mr Gareth Spicer

Rationale and Statement on the importance of Confidentiality

At Corsham Regis Primary Academy ("Academy") we believe that:

- The safety, well being and protection of our pupils are the paramount considerations in all decisions staff at this Academy make about confidentiality. The appropriate¹ sharing of information between Academy staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' well being and safety.
- It is an essential part of the ethos of our Academy that trust is established to enable pupils, staff, and parents/carers to seek help both within and outside the Academy and minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure pupils and staff are supported and safe
- Pupils, parents/carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns, including sex and relationships.
- The Academy's attitude to confidentiality is open and easily understood and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the Academy.
- Issues concerning personal information including sex and relationships and other personal matters can arise at any time.
- Everyone in our Academy community needs to know that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.
- Everyone in our Academy community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the Academy community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any health, sex and relationship or other personal issue they want to discuss.

Definition of Confidentiality

The dictionary definition of confidential is "something which is spoken or given in confidence; private, entrusted with another's secret affairs"

When speaking confidentially to someone the confider has the belief that the confidant will not discuss the content of the conversation with another. The confider is asking for the content of the conversation to be kept secret. Anyone offering absolute confidentiality to someone else

would be offering to keep the content of his or her conversation completely secret and discuss it with no one.

In practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is offered in Corsham Regis Primary Academy. We have tried to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well being and protection of our pupils and staff, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where pupils and staff can ask for help when they need it and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information child protection issues and good practice is followed.

This means that in most cases what is on offer is limited confidentiality. Disclosure of the content of a conversation could be discussed with professional colleagues but the confider would not be identified except in certain circumstances.

The general rule is that staff should make clear that there are limits to confidentiality, at the beginning of the conversation. These limits relate to ensuring child safety and well being. The pupil will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason and will be encouraged to do this for themselves whenever this is possible.

Different levels of confidentiality are appropriate for different circumstances.

1. In the classroom in the course of a lesson given by a member of teaching staff or an outside visitor, including health professionals.

Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson, setting the climate and establishing ground rules to ensure confidential disclosures are not made. It should be made clear to pupils that this is not the time or place to disclose confidential, personal information. (See setting ground rules and working agreements).

When a health professional is contributing to an Academy health education program in a classroom setting, s/he is working with the same boundaries of confidentiality as a teacher.

2. One to one disclosures to members of the Academy staff (including voluntary staff).

It is essential all members of staff know the limits of the confidentiality they can offer to both pupils and parents/carers (see note below) and any required actions and sources of further support or help available both for the pupil or parent/carer and for the staff member within the Academy and from other agencies, where appropriate. All staff at this Academy encourage pupils to discuss difficult issues with their parents or carers, and vice versa. However, the needs of the pupil are paramount and Academy staff will not automatically share information about the pupil with his/her parents/carers unless it is considered to be in the child's best interests.

(Note: That is, that when concerns for a child or young person come to the attention of staff, for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure, however insignificant this might appear to be, the member of staff should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Mr Gareth Spicer) or one of his Deputy DSLs (Mrs Gail McCrum or Mrs Morris) as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible. Please see the Academy's Child Protection Policy.

3. Disclosures to a Counsellor, Academy Nurse or Health Professional operating a confidential service in the Academy.

Health professionals such as Academy nurses can give confidential medical advice to pupils provided they are competent to do so and follow the Fraser Guidelines (guidelines for doctors

and other health professionals on giving medical advice to under 16s). Academy nurses are skilled in discussing issues and possible actions with young people and always have in mind the need to encourage pupils to discuss issues with their parents or carers. However, the needs of the pupil are paramount and the Academy nurse will not insist that a pupil's parents or carers are informed about any advice or treatment they give.

The Legal Position for Academy Staff:

Academy staff (including non-teaching and voluntary staff) should not promise confidentiality. Pupils do not have the right to expect that an incident will not be reported to his/her parents/carers and may not, in the absence of an explicit promise, assume that information conveyed outside that context is private. No member of this Academy's staff can or should give such a promise.

The safety, well being and protection of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this Academy make about confidentiality.

Academy staff are NOT obliged to break confidentiality except where child protection is or may be an issue. However, at Corsham Regis Primary Academy we believe it is important staff are able to share their concerns about pupils with colleagues in a professional and supportive way, on a need to know basis, to ensure staff receive the guidance and support they need and the pupils' safety and well being is maintained. Academy staff should discuss such concerns with the DSL.

Teachers, Counsellor and Health Professionals:

Professional judgement is required by a teacher, counsellor or health professional in considering whether he or she should indicate to a child that the child could make a disclosure in confidence and whether such a confidence could then be maintained having heard the information. In exercising their professional judgement the teacher, counsellor or health professional must consider the best interests of the child including the need to both ensure trust to provide safeguards for our children and possible child protection issues.

All teachers at this Academy receive basic training in child protection as part of their induction to this Academy and are expected to follow the Academy's' child protection policy and procedures.

Visitors and Non-Teaching Staff:

At Corsham Regis Primary Academy, we expect all non teaching staff, including voluntary staff, to report any disclosures by pupils or parents/carers, of a concerning personal nature to the DSL as soon as possible after the disclosure and in an appropriate setting, so others cannot overhear. This is to ensure the safety, protection and well being of all our pupils and staff. The DSL will decide what, if any, further action needs to be taken, both to ensure the pupil gets the help and support they need and that the member of staff also gets the support and supervision they need.

Parents/Carers:

Corsham Regis Primary Academy believes that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and carers and we endeavour to keep parents/carers abreast of their child's progress at the Academy, including any concerns about their progress or behaviour. However, we also need to maintain a balance so that our pupils can share any concerns and ask for help when they need it. Where a pupil does discuss a difficult personal matter with staff at Corsham Regis Primary Academy, they will be encouraged to also discuss the matter with their parent or carer themselves.

The safety, well being and protection of our pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this Academy make about confidentiality.

Complex Cases:

Where there are areas of doubt about the sharing of information, seek a consultation with the Wiltshire Council's Safeguarding at the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

Links to other Academy Policies and Procedures:

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the Academy's Learn4Life (inc: Drug Education and Sex & Relationships Education), Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Code of Conduct Behaviour and Whistle-Blowing policies.

Statement of Ground Rules to be used in Lessons

We adopt ground rules to ensure a safe environment for teaching in particular in PSHE and Circle time. This reduces anxiety to pupils and staff and minimises unconsidered, unintended personal disclosures.

At the beginning of each PSHE lesson and Circle time, pupils are reminded of the ground rules by the teacher or outside visitor. The teacher establishes the ground rules together with the pupils at the beginning of each half term of teaching PSHE and Circle time.

This is an example of the ground rules for a class:

- We won't ask each other or the teacher any personal questions
- We will respect each other and not laugh, tease or hurt others
- We won't say things we want to keep confidential
- We can pass or opt out of something if it makes us feel uncomfortable

- If we do find out things about other pupils, which are personal and private, we won't talk about it outside the lesson, but
- If we are worried about someone else's safety we tell a teacher.

When Confidentiality should be broken and Procedures for doing this:

See the Child Protection Policy

Where this does not apply and you are still concerned and unsure of whether the information should be passed on or other action taken you should speak to Mr Gareth Spicer (DSL)

If the Head teacher issues instructions that he should be kept informed, all staff must comply. There is always a good reason for this, which you may not know about.

The Principles we follow at Corsham Regis Primary Academy are that in all cases we:

- Ensure the time and place are appropriate, when they are not we reassure the child that we understand they need to discuss something very important and that it warrants time, space and privacy. See the child normally (and always in cases of neglect, or abuse) before the

end of the Academy day. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible.

- Tell the child we cannot guarantee confidentiality if we think they will:
 - hurt themselves
 - hurt someone else
 - or they tell us that someone is hurting them or others
- Not interrogate the child or ask leading questions
- We won't put children in the position of having to repeat distressing matters to several people
- Inform the pupil first before any confidential information is shared, with the reasons for this
- Encourage the pupil, whenever possible to confide in his/her own parents/carers

Support for Staff

Staff may have support needs themselves in dealing with some of the personal issues of our pupils. At Corsham Regis Primary Academy we prefer you to ask for help rather than possibly making a poor decision because you don't have all the facts or the necessary training, or taking worries about pupils home with you. There are many agencies we can refer pupils to who need additional support and we have procedures to ensure this happens. We all work together as part of a team to support our pupils and asking for help is a way we ensure Corsham Regis Primary Academy is a happy and safe learning environment. All members of staff at Corsham Regis Primary Academy should discuss any concerns about pupils with Mr Gareth Spicer (DSL) or Mrs Gail McCrum (Deputy DSL) or Mrs Gemma Morris (Deputy DSL).

Onward Referral:

Mr Gareth Spicer (DSL) or Mrs Gail McCrum (Deputy DSL) or Mrs Gemma Morris (Deputy DSL) are responsible for referring pupils from the Academy. Only in exceptional circumstances or in the absence of the DSL, or one of his Deputies, should an individual make a referral to the MASH.

Dissemination and Implementation:

This policy has been distributed to all teaching and non-teaching staff, including volunteers, at the Academy. It is available on the staff shared section of the server.

All new staff, including volunteers, are shown a copy of the policy and where to find it, together with basic training on the Academy's Child Protection Policy and procedures from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Review:

This policy is reviewed annually or whenever deemed necessary by the Headteacher and Governors in the light of events and changes in the law.