

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Governors' Mission Statement

St Peter's School is a Catholic community whose life is centred on the values of the Gospels and the teachings of the Catholic faith. St Peter's School aims to educate its pupils in a Catholic atmosphere so that they are enabled to value life long learning and relate the Gospel message to everyday life and work.

Together the Church, parents and teachers seek to realise the development of the young person as a whole person – body, soul, mind and spirit. The School exists to enable the pupils not simply to grow their own faith but to help them to be able to take their place in the world as mature Christians. We aim as a truly Catholic school to help young people develop a global attitude so that they can see themselves, and play their part as citizens of the world.

School Charter

The school charter was developed by the School Council:

We, the community of St Peter's, declare our commitment to the following:

1. Everyone should work together to promote a true Christian community
2. Everyone should have the right to a secure and friendly environment
3. No-one should have to tolerate verbal, physical or emotional abuse

The School Community

The whole school community has been involved in the development of policy and procedure in the following ways:

- Policy available on the school network/website
- Training all staff on 'Professional Protocols' on the first day of the year, including discussion of the legal framework under which they must work with regard to the best interests of children and young people. This is followed up with regular briefings.
- School Council
- Feedback from Learning Mentor/Pastoral Support staff who work with potentially vulnerable pupils
- Discussions with EWO, SISS
- Consultation with the Governors' Pupil Support Committee

Confidentiality

This policy is to work in partnership with parents and carers in order to promote the welfare and education of children. The school aims to build up a relationship of trust between staff and pupils. Pupils and parents should be able to raise with the school private, personal and family matters, including concerns about safety and welfare, in the knowledge that these will be dealt with sensitively. Any information should be on a strictly 'need to know' basis. The school will only in exceptional circumstances handle information without parental knowledge.

The confidentiality policy and practice will:

- Reassure young people in the school that their best interests will be maintained
- Encourage young people to talk to their parents or carers and give them support to do so
- Ensure that young people in the school know that teachers and mentors cannot offer absolute confidentiality
- Reassure young people in the school that if confidentiality has to be broken they will first be informed and supported as appropriate
- If there is any danger to a third party such as siblings, the school has a legal obligation to follow the school's Child Protection Procedure
- Make sure that young people in the school are informed of sources of confidential help e.g school nurse

- Inform the 'ground rules' staff use as part of the process for establishing a safe climate for learning, in lessons and around the school

What is the policy?

1. The school will operate on the presumption that anything imparted in confidence will be treated in confidence. This undertaking is subject to the following:
 - (i) Unconditional confidentiality must never be promised to a pupil.
 - (ii) A member of staff to whom something has been told in confidence has the right to seek advice, guidance or support of a senior colleague when he/she feels the need to do so. Where a member of staff feels beyond their level of competence, it is proper for them to refer the matter to an appropriate senior colleague. Staff will only talk about pupils and their families in a professional manner.
 - (iii) If serious concerns are being raised about the safety or welfare of a child, a member of staff must act within the school's Child Protection Policy and is required to refer allegations or concerns to the designated member of staff for Child Protection who may then decide to involve outside agencies (see Appendix 1 'Flowchart to show the process for handling any confidential information').
 - (iv) Whenever possible, a member of staff will inform a pupil or parent/carer when they feel they must pass on something told in confidence and will explain the reasons for doing so. This would apply in an emergency or where a child's safety or welfare would be seriously compromised.
2. The school will not pass on to other individuals or agencies information it has about its pupils or families, except with permission or where the information is already in the public domain, or where the school is obliged by law or court order to do so. When the pupil moves to another school, the pupil's file will be passed on a matter of course.

Communicating the policy

The policy will be communicated to all school staff, governors, parents/carers, partner agencies and relevant visitors. This will be done by using the school Newsletter and school Website, working through the School Council and the PSHE programme.

The policy will be in the Staff Handbook. (T Drive)

The flowchart for how to deal with confidential disclosures will be displayed on appropriate staff room notice boards.

The 'Yellow Card' will be available for all visitors and posters of the Yellow Card visible around the school.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

Regular meetings of the Pastoral Team where Lead Tutors and Associate Assistant Head raise any issues regarding pupil welfare. DSL Child Protection records any issues pertaining to Child Protection, monitored by the Headteacher. Termly meetings of the Governors' Pupil Support Committee.

Annual evaluation as part of the Leadership Team monitoring.

See also: Safeguarding Policy, Child Protection Policy and the DfE publication 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

Appendix A.



St. Peter's Catholic School

FLOWCHART TO SHOW THE PROCESS FOR HANDLING ANY CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Dealing with disclosures of personal information

