

# Confidentiality policy

Staff should regard all information they have access to or are given as a result of their work as being confidential unless advised otherwise. No information should be released to a third party without first seeking the agreement of the Head/and or the individual concerned, as appropriate.

The organisation has a duty to safeguard the information contained within application forms etc

Staff should not disclose personal details (home address, telephone number etc) to third parties.

Staff have the right to access their own personal records including application form, police check, supervision reports etc. Should you wish to see these records it can be arranged through the Head.

## Data Protection

All personal information (computerised or otherwise recorded) collected and held by the project is covered by the Data Protection Act. The Act requires all those using or collecting the information to abide by certain key principles.

Broadly, the Principles state that personal data must be -

- obtained and processed fairly and lawfully
- held for the lawful purpose described in the registration
- used only for those purposes, and disclosed only to appropriate people
- adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which they are held
- accurate and where necessary, kept up-to-date
- held no longer than is necessary
- accessible to the individual concerned who, where appropriate, has the right to have information about themselves corrected or erased properly
- safeguarded

## Confidentiality Policy relating to children

1. Complete confidentiality should be maintained within the school. All children should be made aware that any information they give to an adult may be shared within the school on a strictly 'need to know' basis. Children should be encouraged to understand the reasons for this.
2. No-one must not pass on any information about a child to any individual or agency outside of the school without the child's informed consent and the Head's agreement.
3. Reasonable care must be taken to make sure that discussions / conversations and telephone calls relating to individual children cannot be overheard by visitors, other children and anyone outside of the school.
4. Children' records and other information relating to them must be stored securely to prevent accidental or intentional viewing by anyone who is not a worker within the school.
5. Confidentiality may be breached in the following circumstances:
  - When there is a risk of serious harm to any individual, including where a child (under 18) is judged to be at risk of sexual, emotional or physical abuse.
  - Where an adult is aware that a child is involved in criminal activities.
6. In any of these exceptional circumstances, the Head may, after careful thought and consultation, decide to inform the appropriate agencies or authorities, depending on the details of the situation. The child will be informed of the need to breach confidentiality

prior to it happening. Where this is not possible (in an emergency) the child will be informed of the breach at the earliest possible opportunity.

7. Children have the right to see any written information about them, in the presence of their teacher or the Head.

#### **Confidentiality relating to adults**

1. All Staff may have access to their own personal records, including their application forms, supervision records, police checks and references. This can be arranged through the Head.
2. Application forms and other confidential information relating to them should be stored securely in the project offices.
3. Staff' home addresses or telephone numbers should not be disclosed to children.

# Confidentiality Policy - for children

When you are with your mentor, it is important that you can feel free to talk about yourself and the things that affect you.

**You have the right to privacy and safety.** Your mentor will not gossip about you or talk about you to people outside of the school.

Sometimes it will be necessary to share information about you within the school. Your mentor cannot promise to keep what you say a secret between you and her/him. The sort of information that may be shared with other mentors and the Head is:

- If you are being hurt by someone;
- If you are in desperate need of help for something that your mentor can't provide e.g. a safe place to stay, sexual abuse counselling, or help with a drink/drug problem.

There are also circumstances where, in order to protect your safety, your mentor, (through the Head) will need to share information about you outside of the school. Examples of this are:

- If you are being sexually, emotionally or physically abused by someone
- If you are being threatened with violence
- If you tell your mentor that you are going to do any of the above things or anything that will harm you or another person, then they may have a responsibility to tell someone else.

No information will be passed on outside of the school without discussing it with you first. Your views, needs and fears would be taken into account and valued and you would be offered support throughout any procedures that may then follow.

The Head will keep written records about you (to make sure that you will get the most suitable mentor and to keep a record of contact that you and your mentor have). You can see what is written about you whenever you want to.

If you are not sure about anything written here or would like to know more details, please call in to see the Head.