



Willoughton Primary School

The Cliff Federation Confidentiality Policy

<u>Policy Information</u>			
Status:	Statutory	Reviewed by:	Full Governing Board
Cycle of Review:	Every two years	Policy Ratified	May 2023
Signed as accepted:			

Please note, in this policy, a ‘disclosure’ is the sharing of any private/personal information. It is a general term and does not just relate to child protection issues.

Contactable Staff:

Mrs Angie Waplington designated staff members for child protection
Mrs Tina Dean
Mrs Helen Jenkin
Mrs Ange Willcox

Introduction and context

The Cliff Federation recognises its legal duty under section 175 education act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and protecting them from “significant harm”.

The staff seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children and young people as part of their general responsibility for pastoral care.

The Cliff Federation staff hope that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns or worries which may affect educational progress and that they will see school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

The Cliff Federation recognises the following benefits of working to a confidentiality policy:

- It highlights the importance of pupils being able to talk to adults in the school to share their problems in a safe and supportive environment.
- It safeguards the wellbeing of those involved in the disclosure of confidential information.
- It builds trust between pupils and staff.
- It empowers each pupil to exercise control over the choices that will affect their life.
- It prevents the need to deal with each disclosure as a crisis in isolation. (see guidance on school specific information 1 – appendix 1)

Governing Body: Full Governors

Review Date:

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A definition of confidentiality

Confidentiality is an understanding that any information shared with someone in trust can only be passed on to a third party with the agreement of the person disclosing it.

The limits of confidentiality

Staff, pupils, parents/carers will be informed about the limits of confidentiality in this school. Some issues have to be shared with other people/agencies e.g. Child protection.

Pupils will be advised (wherever possible prior to a disclosure) what kinds of disclosure will require information to be shared, what will be done with the information and who else will have access to it.

Members of staff will be made aware of whom (if anyone) to inform in the event of different types of disclosures of a personal nature.

This school recognises that confidential discussions need to take place in a confidential environment. Public places such as the staffroom, the classroom and the playground are not, in general confidential environments.

This school will provide opportunities for its pupils to access confidential support on school premises in the following ways: - a room will be provided for any support required e.g. 1:1 support from youth inclusion service, BOSS support work , counselling work.

Parents/carers and pupils have the right to view educational records upon written request. It is therefore not possible to guarantee the confidentiality of recorded information (see – recording of information in supporting information).

Staff are required to pass on confidential information in the following circumstances:

- Child protection;
- Where there is risk of serious harm or threat to life;
- Where a pupil needs urgent medical treatment;
- Where potential or actual serious crime (e.g. Murder, rape) is involved;
- Where safeguarding national security is involved, e.g. Terrorism.

Responsibilities to parents/carers

Members of staff are not legally obliged to inform parents/carers in many instances when personal information has been disclosed.

Where it is believed that the pupil may be at emotional or physical risk, or in breach of the law, staff will ensure that the pupil is aware of the risks they face.

Staff will encourage the pupil to inform and seek support from their parents/carers.

In most cases information provided by a pupil will only be passed to their parents/carers with the pupil's consent.

When the school chooses to inform parents/carers it will only be done if it is in the best interests of the child.

Illegal activity

Members of staff are not obliged to inform the police on most matters relating to illegal activity e.g. Illegal drugs activity, assaults

In the case of illegal activity, the school will discuss the possible consequences with the pupil and seek the course of action with the most positive outcomes for the pupil.

Staff roles and responsibilities

All staff (teaching and non-teaching staff) will be made aware of the confidentiality policy and their entitlement to training and support in its implementation.

All staff are under a contractual obligation to uphold the policy as with all other school policies. Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary procedures being followed.

This policy has been seen and discussed by all staff at The Cliff Federation and new staff will be given a copy on joining the team.

Staff can seek advice and support for themselves when dealing with a disclosure whilst keeping the individual's identity anonymous. The school will maintain an up-to-date list of appropriate contacts for staff so that they can seek support. [See front of this policy]

Working with External Agencies

Anyone working with pupils from The Cliff Federation, particularly on sensitive areas of the curriculum needs to be made aware of this confidentiality policy.

The Cliff Federation School staff and staff from external agencies will establish at the beginning of lessons dealing with potentially sensitive topics that it is inappropriate to disclose personal information during the lesson. Ground rules need to be agreed which ensure individuals do not pressure one another to answer questions about their own experiences.

Staff will outline the sources of support available to any pupil who may wish to discuss the topics and/or their feelings further on a one-to-one basis. All children are reminded when completing the pupil questionnaires that they can talk to a member of staff if they have any worries or concerns.

This school acknowledges and supports the differences between the role of any non-school staff as educators, and as providers of information and support to pupils. The boundaries between these roles will be clarified and agreed prior to involvement. Any distinctions in terms of confidentiality need to be made clear to pupils.

Recording Information

The school acknowledges that:

- Pupils and their parents/carers have a right to gain access to processed information upon written request.
- Agencies such as the police and social services dept. may be able to get a court order to gain access to processed information, which the school deems confidential. This can also include the local authority's legal department and insurers, as well as other solicitors e.g. in custody cases.

Any information recorded about a pupil will be written in a way that assumes it will be read by either the subject or their parents/carers.

In order to comply with GDPR, any processed information will be stored in accordance with the schools record management systems.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed after each significant disclosure to ensure that the policy and procedures work appropriately.

This policy should also be cross-referenced to the Data Protection policy.

Pupils will be consulted during the review process.

Communicating the Policy

The policy will be communicated to all Cliff Federation I staff, governors, parents/carers, partner agencies and relevant visitors.

