



New Forest Small School

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Member of Staff Responsible	Headteacher
Regularity of Review	2 yearly

Rationale

New Forest Small School recognises that there are occasions when young people have worries or concerns and feel that they are unable to talk to their parents/carers. This can cause stress and impact negatively on the young person; so much as to affect their education and their health. It is not uncommon for young people to seek support from school staff. As members of the school community we want to be able to offer advice and information however we need to ensure that we maintain professional boundaries.

New Forest Small School believes this policy will help towards demonstrating its commitment in supporting the National Healthy Schools Standard (NHSS) and delivery of Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE).

Aims & Objectives

To provide clear guidelines to ensure that all members of staff, personnel from external agencies, and volunteers engaged by the school, are informed about the levels of confidentiality that they should provide to pupils.

Scope

The policy applies to all matters relating to the confidentiality of pupil information and encompasses:

- All teaching and support staff employed by the school.
- All visiting staff working with young people on the school site during the school day.
- Personnel from External Agencies.
- Volunteers

The scope of this policy does not extend to confidentiality matters relating to staff.

Procedures

Teaching/Support Staff/Visiting Staff/Volunteers

- When supporting young people there is a need to be aware that you are not able to offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue.
- Pupils should be informed immediately that if there is a potential child protection /safeguarding issue where the pupil, or others, are likely to be at risk of harm you are under a duty to inform the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – please refer to school's Safeguarding and Child protection Policy.
- It is good practice to encourage pupils to talk to parents/carers about the issue that may be troubling them, unless they may be placing themselves at risk.
- There are a number of specialist confidential services that can be signposted to the young person in addition to the schools' visiting counsellor.

All personnel from external agencies are expected to comply with their own organisations' and profession's code of conduct on all matters relating to confidentiality when working with New Forest Small School pupils.

Counselling for Students

- A counselling service is available to the students for a confidential discussion. The school counsellor or representative from an external agency cannot offer confidentiality over Child Protection/Safeguarding issues. The school recognises the value that counselling sessions offer pupils. There is no requirement for a counsellor to inform the school about illegal activities unless there is a child protection/safeguarding issue or other significant risk. Referrals can be made individually by students or by members of staff.
- Parents are made aware, when appropriate, of external agencies that offer support and guidance to students and parents.

Peer Mentoring and Support; including adult mentors

- There is much value in providing pupils with an opportunity to talk with fellow pupils and the school believes that some older pupils have the appropriate maturity to carry out this role. Students receive advice on mentoring techniques and understand their responsibilities.
- Students understand that they are not allowed to promise to keep secrets; however conversations between mentor and mentee will be kept confidential except in the following circumstances:

The mentor must tell the DSL or a teacher if a student discloses either any form of abuse or anything else that would make them worry about a mentee's safety, or the safety of another student.

If a mentee is about to disclose information of this nature, the mentor must tell the mentee that they will need to take them to a member of staff.

- If a mentor has a concern about the content of a mentoring meeting, they are encouraged to discuss it with the DSL.

Parents/Carers and Families

- As a school we believe that communication between school and parents plays an important role in providing high quality pastoral support for young people.
- We will respect the wishes of the family to keep information confidential, however if it is necessary to share the information we will discuss this with parents/carers first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and/or there is an overriding child protection/safeguarding concern.

Linked Policies

- This policy is to be read and practised in conjunction with the following school policies:

Anti-bullying
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Health and Safety
Drugs
Sex and Relationship Education

Dissemination

This policy will be widely publicised and appropriate training will be provided. The policy will appear in:

- the school website
- links to other school policies(above)
- staff training
- Induction of new staff (Teaching & Support), and volunteers
- Guidelines for personnel from external agencies

References

(1) Fraser Guidelines for health practitioners with regard to confidential health services (including contraception) to pupils under the age of 16”

The Fraser Guidelines state that a health professional can give contraceptive advice or treatment to a person under 16 without parental consent providing that the health professional is satisfied that:

- The young person understands the advice and has sufficient maturity to appreciate what is involved in terms of moral, legal and social and emotional implications for themselves.
- They cannot be persuaded to tell their parents/carers, or allow them to be informed.
- They are likely to begin or continue having unprotected sex with or without contraceptive advice.
- The young person’s physical or mental health is likely to suffer unless they receive advice or treatment.
- It is in the young person’s best interests to give advice or treatment.

Monitoring

This policy and its practice will be monitored annually by the Headteacher. Any concerns and or issues arising will be reported to the Chair of Governors and School Manager as appropriate.

Safeguarding is considered in all meetings, so that any serious concerns or issues will be reported to Headteachers keeping the personnel anonymous.