



STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

SLT Responsible Person: Mr D Lewis

Date of Policy: April 2021

Date to be reviewed: April 2024

Approved by: Senior Leadership Team – 29 April 2021

Published: Website/Staff Intranet

To be read in conjunction with:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
Relationship and Sex Education Policy
Online Safety and Data Security Policy
Behaviour for Learning Policy

Principles

Students can often present with a variety of complex difficulties and problems. Many of these are of a confidential nature. The aim of a Confidentiality Policy is to provide staff with a framework of guidelines within which they can work safely and professionally to act in the best interests of the students.

Purpose of a Confidentiality Policy

All schools and colleges are, on occasions, asked to keep information confidential. This can relate to a variety of issues such as underage sexual activity, abuse, drug use or other dangerous or illegal activities. This policy sets out guidance for all staff about student information that they can regard as confidential and that which they cannot. It is important that the whole College follows the same clear and explicit guidelines. The policy acts in conjunction with existing whole College policies such as Safeguarding. All staff must be aware of the policy and understand their role within it. Students, parents and carers are to be made aware of the Confidentiality Policy and what it means to them.

1. Any information that a student discloses to a member of staff or visitor should not be passed on to other colleagues indiscriminately but should only be discussed on a “need to know basis”.
2. Members of staff should not offer students, or their parents and carers, blanket or unconditional confidentiality.
3. Any information concerning a student’s behaviour or conduct that is likely to cause harm to themselves, or to others, should be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or the pastoral support team.
4. Students should be informed and reminded about the Confidentiality Policy at appropriate times throughout their schooling.
5. When embarking on a lesson, or a programme of lessons, that may well touch on sensitive and/or controversial issues, teachers should clarify with students the issue of confidentiality. The classroom is a public place and confidentiality cannot be offered. However, teachers should establish ground rules with their teaching groups in order to avoid inappropriate questions and answers in class or in group sessions which may lead to personal disclosures.
6. Teachers need to understand that effective positive relationships with students can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. If a personal disclosure is made, the staff member must explain that confidentiality cannot be promised and any information relating to personal safety or risk of harm to the child or someone else will need to be shared with the DSL. Staff must follow guidance outlined in the Safeguarding Policy for Dealing with a Disclosure.
7. There may be occasions where a child’s right to privacy may be outweighed by a duty to report illegal activity to the police. For example, if a student is found in possession of an illegal substance.
8. Some external agencies may be working in the College offering specific advice and support directly to individual students. If this is the case, their professional code of confidentiality must be shared with the College and any deviation from the College’s policy must be agreed formally with the College and shared with the students concerned. **Confidentiality must not be permitted where there are child protection concerns.**

Parents and carers must also be informed that such agencies are working in the College, or using the College’s premises to make contact with students. Parents and carers should know when these external agencies are providing students with an additional service that is not part of the College’s curriculum or its extra-curricular activities and that they will not be bound by the College’s

confidentiality policy but by their own professional codes on confidentiality; unless it is deemed this knowledge would increase the risk of harm.

9. The College employs a qualified nurse who operates within a set of professional protocols that are guided by the medical profession and differ from the guidelines adhered to by other staff. These protocols support patient confidentiality and prioritise medical care of the individual. The Safeguarding Policy still applies.
10. Members of staff are not legally obliged to pass on information about students to their parents and carers, however, it is only in the most exceptional circumstances that the College would be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge (below years 12 and 13). The reasons for not informing the parents and carers should be recorded in writing. If a teacher believes a student to be at risk of harm, or in breach of the law, they must ensure that the student is aware of the risks and encourage them to tell their parents and carers and seek support from them. The Headteacher or a senior member of staff should always be informed before parents and carers are contacted. See the Safeguarding Policy for further clarification.
11. Students should also be informed about where they might seek confidential help such as other local advice and support services or their GP.
12. The College reserves the right to examine students' ICT accounts and/or confiscate electronic items if it is believed the contents may be harmful to themselves or others.