



Confidentiality Policy

Policy Control	
Responsible Person:	Headteacher
Responsible Governor Team:	Teaching and Learning
Approved by Governors:	Jan 2017
Date due for review:	Jan 2020

Our school policies are written with the objective of continuously improving the school in our aim of realising the school's vision:

Goudhurst & Kilndown Church of England Primary School will provide a happy, caring and stimulating environment rooted in Christian values in which every child will flourish. We will realise the potential of every child and instil a lifelong love of learning. Our approach to teaching and learning will be inclusive, supportive and innovative and will embrace new education initiatives and leading technology. We will ensure that our children are aware of the world in which they live, understand the need to play an active role within the local and wider community and appreciate the importance of living a sustainable way of life. In partnership with parents and carers, we will help our children to build high self-esteem, independence and resilience and to develop the life skills they need for their future in an ever-changing world.

Our School Values

Goudhurst and Kilndown Church of England Primary School values

Community • Friendship • Joy • Love • Peace • Trust

and all our stakeholders are encouraged to *reflect* upon their learning and their actions

1. Confidentiality.

Pupils occasionally make personal disclosures, either in class or to individual teachers. They may disclose that they are engaging in under-age sexual activity, that they, or friends or relatives, are using drugs, or that they have been abused.

Teachers may come to possess sensitive information about pupils, some of it about illegal activity. All parties need to be clear about the rules of confidentiality which apply in these circumstances. A school policy about confidentiality will reassure teachers.

2. Relevant principles to consider.

- Our confidentiality policy provides guidance about who needs to know in particular instances as information about pupils should not be passed on indiscriminately. The headteacher should be informed in all circumstances and staff have a contractual obligation to comply.
- Teachers should never offer pupils or their parents unconditional confidentiality. Information about behaviour likely to cause harm to the pupil or to others must be passed to the appropriate agency. (see Child protection policy; Staff and Pupil Welfare policy)
- Teachers should make it clear to pupils that although most information can be kept confidential, some may need to be passed on in the young person's best interest. However, the pupil will know when this has to happen, what will be done with the information and who will have access to it.
- In the case of illegal activity, action should be taken in the best interests of the pupil. This does not necessarily involve informing the police. Teachers are not obliged to inform the police about illegal drug activity, for example. The school's police liaison officer will provide specific guidance.
- Teachers are not obliged to pass on information about their pupils to parents, although where teachers believe the pupil to be at moral or physical risk, or in breach of the law, they must ensure that the pupil is aware of the risks and encourage them to seek support from their parents.
- Where outside agencies and others provide support for the PSE programme, they must be made aware of, and abide by the policy about disclosures and confidentiality. However, they may also have a role in providing advice and support directly to pupils. The boundary between these two roles must be agreed with the school and the distinction, in terms of the right to confidentiality, be made clear to all pupils.
- Some people are bound by their own professional codes of confidentiality. For example, school nurses are bound by the medical code of confidentiality in their work with children and young people. Pupils who seek help from teachers about their personal health, can be referred to the school nurse or their family doctor.
- In lessons, teachers should establish from the beginning that it is inappropriate to disclose personal information. Ground rules, which ensure pupils agree not to pressure one another to answer questions about their own experiences, also apply to staff.

3. Handling sensitive and controversial issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in PSHE and citizenship teaching; in fact the aim of the programme may be to enable pupils to address these

issues directly and to develop the skills of reasoned argument. Sex education, religion and politics are examples of topics which concern values and beliefs and which may, therefore arouse strong feelings. Their place in the curriculum is regulated by law. Other issues likely to be sensitive or controversial include family lifestyles and values, law and order, environmental issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers should:

- ensure pupils establish ground rules about how they will behave towards each other and how the issue will be dealt with;
- judge when to allow pupils to discuss issues on their own in small groups and when to join in and offer support;
- ensure that pupils are clear about the difference between fact, opinion and belief, and that they have access to balanced information and views against which they can clarify their own opinions and views, including contributions made by visitors to the classroom;
- decide how far they are prepared to express their own views, bearing in mind that they are in an influential position and that they have to work within the school's framework;
- provide appropriate support after a session for any pupil who may be troubled by an issue raised.

(Taken from "Passport – A framework for personal and social development", written by Jane Lees and Sue Plant and commissioned by the Gulbenkian Foundation)

4. Parent helpers.

The school values the support given by parents helping within the classrooms. The school needs parent and other helpers to show the same level of confidentiality expected by the teaching and non teaching staff. All helpers should read and sign the 'Helpers in school – guidelines on confidentiality, a copy of which is in Appendix 1.'

5. Using visitors well – a good practice guide.

A visitor's contribution must enhance the overall education experience for young people. It must add a dimension which the teacher alone cannot deliver.

Whilst visitors can bring a wealth of skills and expertise to the school setting, it should be recognised that the majority of them have no formal training in classroom management and teaching and learning strategies. Visitors should never be left alone to work with pupils: the teacher and visitor need to share the experience in order to provide appropriate planning, deal with any issues that arise during the session(s) and as a result of the session(s).

6. Working one-to-one.

If a teacher is not going to be present when a visitor is talking with a pupil/small group of pupils, the headteacher must establish a protocol for confidentiality and

setting boundaries. Any visitor working in this way should be police checked. Parents/carers should be made aware of the school's policy. If, after careful negotiation, a school or a visitor insists that a member of staff is not present, the visitor should not deliver the agreed input. If, after careful negotiation a school and visitor cannot agree on the appropriate presence of school staff, then the school would normally cancel the visit.

7. School checklist.

1. Has the visitor been made aware of the visitor's guidance sheets?
2. How will the visitor be made aware of the school's ethos and values?
3. Who will have the strategic overview and their contributions in school?
4. Is the contribution from the visitor integrated into the curriculum planning process?
5. Have arrangements been made to ensure that the visitor is aware of:
 - The size of the group
 - What is appropriate for the pupils' age and development stage
 - What preparatory activities will take place
 - What follow-up will be provided
 - How the sessions will be organised
 - What resources will be available
 - How the sessions will be evaluated
 - The need to arrange a meeting to discuss the above and familiarise the visitor with the school campus
 - Whom to contact in an emergency, when working on-to-one
6. Has the visitor been familiarised with appropriate policies, e.g. confidentiality?
7. Are there appropriate vetting arrangements in place, e.g. references from other schools/places where delivery has occurred?

Visitors Checklist

Are you clear with regard to the following points?	
What is the rationale/purpose for your visit to the school? Is it complementary to the ethos and values of both the school and your organisation/agency/personal input?	
Where does your visit fit into the whole planned curriculum as a whole?	
What will pupils have experienced in this subject prior to your input?	
How will the teacher be involved during the session? E.g. delivery? Classroom management?	

Are you aware of the following?	
The size of the group and venue?	
What is appropriate for the pupils' age and developmental stage, e.g. language, concentration span, pace of presentation?	
What preparatory activities will take place, e.g. would a pre-visit to see the teacher working with the class be useful?	
What follow-up will be provided by teaching staff?	
How is the session to be organised? E.g whole school, class, group work?	
What resources are available to support the session/visit?	

Goudhurst and Kilndown Church of England Primary School.

Helpers in school – guidance on confidentiality.

The school values the support of volunteers within the classroom. Many people over the years have come in to help with reading, either individual or group reading. Some extra curricular activities, particularly sporting activities such as football & netball would not be able to take place, or would involve fewer children, if it weren't for the help of parents. We use the expertise of other volunteers to work with the children cooking, on art projects etc.

The headteacher in consultation with the class teacher will decide where a volunteer works. It may be down to the specific needs of a class but usually it will depend on the effect a parent has on their child in that class. Some children ignore the fact that their parent is working in the room whilst it can have a negative effect on other children particularly on their behaviour. Very occasionally, we suspect a parent is volunteering help so they can compare their child's progress to others. Where an adult works is at the discretion of the school.

Parents expect total confidentiality from teaching and non teaching staff and this extends to volunteer helpers.

Volunteers will see children they know outside school in a different light. They may see different behaviour, invariably better. They will see the range of ability in the class and what individuals can and can't do. They will realise that some children learn quicker than others. They will realise that some children have special needs and need a lot of help. Some of this will come as a surprise. All of this needs to be kept totally confidential.

It is best that you have a policy that you never talk about your work in school as other parents can probe you as to how their child is getting on compared to others, behaviour etc. It is important that things are not discussed at home with a partner especially when children are present. These have all caused problems here and at other schools in the past.

If there is something you don't understand or something concerns you, ask please.

And finally, thank you very much for volunteering to help in the school; it is much appreciated by the staff, parents and me!

Lindsay Roberts
Headteacher

Name of volunteer:.....

Class:.....

Signature of volunteer:

Signature of class teacher:.....

Date:.....