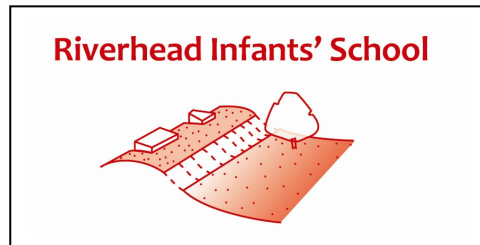


Riverhead Infants' School

Confidentiality Policy



This policy reviewed by: *Governors*

Date: 5th July 2010
Chair of *Governors*.

Next Review Date: July 2012

Member of staff responsible: Mrs Heather Powell

Date of next review: May 2012 (or earlier if deemed necessary in light of events and changes in the law)

Pupils, parents/carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns, including sex and relationships.

In the event of a member of staff having a concern over what a pupil discloses to them, arising under any circumstance, they should report this to the Designated Child Protection Officer seeking advice from their line manager immediately if required, as a possible child protection issue.

This policy forms part of the induction of all new staff, including voluntary staff and is reviewed every 2 years.

At Riverhead Infants' School our policy on confidentiality is that:

- The safety, well being and protection of our pupils are the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils well being and safety.
- It is an essential part of the ethos of our school that trust is established to enable pupils, staff, and parents/carers to seek help both within and outside the school and minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure pupils, staff are supported and safe
- The school's attitude to confidentiality is open and easily understood and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school.
- Issues concerning personal information including sex and relationships and other personal matters can arise at any time.
- No member of this school's staff can or should give any promise of confidentiality.

- Everyone in the school community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the school community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any health, sex and relationship or other personal issue they want to discuss.

The way we implement the Policy

Definition of Confidentiality

The dictionary definition of confidential is "something which is spoken or given in confidence; private, entrusted with another's secret affairs"

When speaking confidentially to someone, the confider has the belief that the confidant will not discuss the content of the conversation with another. The confider is asking for the content of the conversation to be kept secret. Anyone offering absolute confidentiality to someone else would be offering to keep the content of his or her conversation completely secret and discuss it with no one.

Different levels of confidentiality are appropriate for different circumstances however we will not guarantee confidentiality to anyone within the school environment.

1. In the classroom in the course of a lesson given by a member of teaching staff or an outside visitor, including health professionals. Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson, setting the climate and establishing ground rules to try to ensure inappropriate disclosures are not made. It should be made clear to pupils that this is not the time or place to disclose confidential, personal information. (See setting groundrules and working agreements).

When a health professional is contributing to a school health education programme in a classroom setting, s/he is working with the same boundaries of confidentiality as a teacher.

2. One to one disclosures to members of school staff (including voluntary staff).

It is essential all members of staff know the limits of the confidentiality they can offer to both pupils and parents/carers (see note below) and any required actions and sources of further support or help available both for the pupil or parent/carer and for the staff member within the school and

from other agencies, where appropriate. All staff at this school encourage pupils to discuss difficult issues with their parents or carers, and vice versa. However, the needs of the pupil are paramount and school staff will not automatically share information about the pupil with his/her parents/carers unless it is considered to be in the child's best interests.

(Note: That is, that when concerns for a child come to the attention of staff, for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure, however insignificant this might appear to be, the member of staff should discuss this with the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (DCPC) as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible. Please see the school Child Protection Policy.)

The legal position for school staff (including non-teaching staff) and volunteers:

School staff (including non-teaching and voluntary staff) can not promise confidentiality. Pupils do not have the right to expect that an incident will not be reported to his/her parents/carers and may not assume that information conveyed is private. No member of this school's staff can or should give such a promise.

The safety, well being and protection of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality.

At Riverhead Infants' School, we expect all non teaching staff, including voluntary staff, except those identified in the paragraph above, to report any disclosures by pupils or parents/carers, of a concerning personal nature to the designated child protection co-ordinator as soon as possible after the disclosure and in an appropriate setting, so others cannot overhear. This is to ensure the safety, protection and well being of all our pupils and staff. The designated child protection co-ordinator will decide what, if any, further action needs to be taken, both to ensure the pupil gets the help and support they need and that the member of staff also gets the support and supervision they need.

All Riverhead Infants School teachers and staff receive basic training in child protection as part of their induction to this school and are expected to follow the schools' child protection policy and procedures.

Parents/carers:

Riverhead Infants' School believes that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and carers and we endeavour to keep parents/carers abreast of their child's progress at school, including any concerns about their progress or behaviour. However, we also need to maintain a balance so that our pupils can share any concerns and ask for help when they need it. Where a pupil does discuss a difficult personal matter staff at Riverhead Infants' School, they will be encouraged to discuss the matter with their parent or carer themselves.

The safety, well being and protection of our pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality.

Complex cases:

Where there are areas of doubt about the sharing of information, we will seek a consultation with our local KCC Children's Safeguards Service Child Protection Co-ordinator.

Links to other school policies and procedures:

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the school's

PSHE including SEAL

Drugs

Sex and Relationship

Child Protection

Bullying

Behaviour

& Looked After Children policies

We adopt ground rules to ensure a safe environment for teaching in particular in PSHE and Circle time. This reduces anxiety to pupils and staff and minimises unconsidered, unintended personal disclosures.

The principles we follow at Riverhead Infants' School are that in all cases we:

- Ensure the time and place are appropriate, when they are not we reassure the child that we understand they need to discuss something very important and that it warrants time, space and privacy.
See the child normally (and always in cases of neglect, or abuse) before the end of the school day. More serious concerns must be

reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible.

- Tell the child we will not offer confidentiality
- Not interrogate the child or ask leading questions
- We won't put children in the position of having to repeat distressing matters to several people
- Inform the pupil first before any confidential information is shared, with the reasons for this
- Encourage the child, whenever possible to confide in his/her own parents/carers

Support for staff

Staff may have support needs themselves in dealing with some of the personal issues of our pupils. At Riverhead Infants' School we prefer you to ask for help rather than possibly making a poor decision because you don't have all the facts or the necessary training, or taking worries about pupils home with you. There are many agencies we can refer pupils to who need additional support and we have procedures to ensure this happens. We all work together as part of a team to support our pupils and asking for help is a way we ensure Riverhead Infants' School is a happy and safe learning environment.

Riverhead Infants' School teaching staff should discuss any concerns about pupils with the Headteacher, LSA's with Mrs. Powell.

Any unresolved issues should be discussed with the Chair of Governors.

Onward referral:

Mrs Powell, the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator, is responsible for referring pupils to outside agencies from the school. Please do not make referrals yourself unless you believe a child protection referral to the police or SSD is necessary and the designated person does not agree. ('What to do if you're worried a child is being abused', DfES, HO, etc., 2006).

Childline Posters are displayed in school, informing pupils of where they can obtain confidential help.

Dissemination and implementation:

This policy will be distributed to all teaching and non-teaching staff, including volunteers, at the school as part of a training session, where all

staff will receive training on the content and practical applications of the policy.

All new staff, including volunteers, will receive a copy of the policy, together with basic training on the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures from the Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator.

Review:

This policy is reviewed every 2 years or whenever deemed necessary by the Headteacher and Governors in the light of events and changes in the law.