

## SUGAR VALLEY RURAL CHARTER SCHOOL

POLICY NUMBER: 209  
SECTION: PUPILS  
TITLE: **CONFIDENTIALITY**  
DATE ADOPTED: NOVEMBER 1998  
DATE LAST REVISED: NOVEMBER 2008

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

#### PURPOSE

To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff. To encourage young people to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems.

#### DEFINITION

Confidentiality is defined as “something which is spoken or given in private, entrusted with another’s secret affairs.”

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.

In practice, there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality is offered in our school. We strive to balance between ensuring the safety, well being and protection of our pupils and staff, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where pupils and staff can ask for help when they need it and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information, child protection issues and good practice are followed.

#### GUIDELINES

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
2. All social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
3. The school continues to actively promotes a positive ethos and respect for the individual
  - a) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. And all staff have regular training on child protection issues.

- b) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
- c) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
- d) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the schools discipline policy.
- e) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- f) No member of staff discusses an individual child's behavior in the presence of another child in school.
- g) Staff do not enter into detailed discussion about a child's behavior with other children or their parents.
- h) Parents in school, working as volunteers do not report cases of poor behavior or pupil discipline to other parents in school. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy.
- i) Matters of Child Protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis.
- j) It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters in order to support individuals. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.
- k) Volunteers, students and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in school.

4. Parents and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.

5. The school works hard to communicate with parents and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents about issues that are causing concern. The school encourages children to talk to parents about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents.

6. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. A lot of data is generated in schools by these categories but individual children should not be able to be identified.

7. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every two years for all staff.

8. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other groups dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs. Strategies are in place and all children are aware of them for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures.

9. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified.

10. Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time especially at parents evening. However parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.

- a) All personal information about children including social services records should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information.
- b) Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports,
- c) Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log.
- d) In all other notes, briefing sheets etc a child should not be able to be identified.
- e) Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Staff may wish to discuss an individual case with a class or group. For instance it can support the inclusion of a child with Aspergers Syndrome or Autism, if their peers are made aware of the condition and so have some idea of what to expect. Similarly a child with visual impairment can be supported if his/her friends know how to look out for them in the playground. In such cases permission will be sought from the child and his/her parents.