

Confidentiality Policy



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1. Introduction

It is important to have established procedures for dealing with confidentiality which is understood by students, staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors, parents and carers and visitors to the school. This will avoid ad hoc arrangements in response to a crisis.

A consistent and shared ethos will help all stakeholders deal with, and know where they stand with confidential issues. It will help deal with the disclosure of information and establish ways of working (for example in PSHE) which respect privacy and avoid unnecessary personal disclosure.

2. Why have a Confidentiality Policy?

- It highlights the importance of students being able to talk to adults in school to share their problems in a safe and supportive environment.
- It safeguards the well being of those involved in the disclosure of confidential information.
- It builds trust between students and staff.
- It empowers each student to exercise control over choices that will affect their lives.
- It avoids dealing with each disclosure as a crisis in isolation.

3. Every Child Matters

This Policy seeks to uphold the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

- Be healthy.
- Stay safe.
- Enjoy and achieve.

- Make a positive contribution.
- Achieve economic well being.

4. Aims of the Confidentiality Policy

- To define and communicate to all stakeholders what confidentiality means.
- Develop a shared understanding of how confidentiality operates at Princes Risborough School.
- To develop and share a consistent ethos which protects both students and staff.
- To support procedures set out in Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children in Education (April 2005).
- To support the principles within the following Policies:
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Anti – Bullying Policy
 - Child Protection Policy
 - Drugs Policy
 - Sex & Relationships Education Policy
 - Referral to Outside Agencies Policy

5. Definition

The dictionary defines confidential as “something that is written or spoken and given in confidence”; ‘entrusted with private or restricted information’

6. The Needs of Students

At Princes Risborough School we seek to create a safe, caring and supportive environment for students by:

- Staff and governors recognising that all students have a right to privacy and mutual respect
- Providing students with opportunities to speak and be listened to without prejudice.
- Upholding the principles within the Child Protection Policy and Anti- Bullying Policy regarding disclosures to an adult.
- Promoting positive self-esteem and self-discipline.
- Promoting healthy relationships based upon mutual respect.
- Take necessary actions to resolve issues.
- Giving all students a copy of our “Princes Risborough Confidentiality Charter” (see Appendix 1).

7. The Needs of the School Community

The term school community in this context refers to teachers, support staff, governors, supply staff, external agencies and visitors to the school.

At Princes Risborough School we seek to support all of the above groups in dealing with confidential issues by:

- Effectively communicating the aims of our Confidentiality Policy.
- Providing all staff with training opportunities to deal with confidential issues.

- Providing information on a “needs to know” basis.
- Offer support to all of the above groups when dealing with confidential issues.

8. The Needs of Parents and Carers

- Parents and carers are encouraged to take an active role in their child’s education.
- The school will promote this Policy to all parents. Copies of the Policy will be available to parents upon request from the school office. It can also be accessed via our website (<http://www.princesrisborough.bucks.sch.uk/>).
- To support the school in promoting this Policy by providing information on a “need to know” basis.

9. The Needs of External Agencies

- Princes Risborough School works closely with a number of external agencies (see Policy for Referral of Students to External Agencies) to support students. It is recognised by the school that many of these agencies have their own Codes of Confidentiality.
- A copy of Princes Risborough School Confidentiality Policy will be given to any external agency working in the school.

10. Procedures for Dealing with Confidential Issues and Disclosures

If a student discloses abuse staff are expected to follow procedures as outlined in the **Princes Risborough School Child Protection Policy**.

For other confidential disclosures the following procedures should be adopted:

- Remember that despite robust ground rules that you may have in the classroom, disclosures can be made in a class or group situation. You must take steps to ensure appropriate follow up and support is given to the student.
- If a student starts to talk to you about something important to them, which may be of a confidential nature, interrupt them and make the student aware that you may not be able to keep certain information confidential. (See Appendix 1 Princes Risborough School Confidentiality Charter).
- Find a suitable place to listen to the student’s concerns where there will be no interruptions.
- Remember significant points for possible recording afterwards.
- If you think only listening is needed reassure the student that they can come back to you to talk about this or any other matter. At a later date enquire of the student in a non-intrusive way as to how they are to allow the student to revisit their concerns if they wish.
- If you need to know more about the subject of the disclosure seek advice from colleagues, help-lines, internet, self-help groups, support agencies etc.
- If you think action or a referral needs to be made to support agencies speak to/refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In their absence speak to the Deputy designated Child Protection Teacher or Headteacher.
- Speak to the student about the involvement of support agencies and seek the student’s consent. Remind the student that as a member of staff you have a duty of care to them.
- Where appropriate inform parents/carers of students about a disclosure.
- Any notes or records of discussions relating to a confidential disclosure should be passed to the Designated Child Protection teacher who will hold them, if necessary in a secure area separate from the student’s main school records. If it is deemed unnecessary to hold the information on record the Designated Child Protection teacher will shred the notes.

11. Reviewing and Evaluating This Policy

The effectiveness of this Policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Student views on dealing with confidential issues canvassed through annual student survey and the views of Year and School Councils.
- Record of referral to external agencies.
- Report to Student Welfare Group.

12. GDPR Implications

GDPR categorises the information listed in Para 4 above as 'Special Category Data', this is information *'which the GDPR says is more sensitive, and so needs more protection'*¹. Further detailed information regarding the regulations outlining the 'sharing of confidential information' can be found in our new GDPR compliant Data Protection Policy. This policy will also incorporate further detail from the recently passed Safeguarding amendment (85) to the Data Protection Bill, which was adopted by the House of Commons Public Bill Committee on 13 March 2018.

¹ ICO <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/special-category-data/> dated 11 May 2018

Princes Risborough School Confidentiality Charter

We are here to listen not to tell

and

We will do our best to maintain any confidence you may tell us

- We may share the information with other staff in order to ensure the best care for you.
- There are times when we **have** to tell someone else what is happening.
 - *If you are under 18 and tell us about someone who has abused you, physically, sexually or emotionally or if we believe this to be the case.*
 - *If your life or another person's life is at risk.*
 - *If you tell us about someone else who is under 18 and is being abused.*
 - *If you tell us about criminal activity which puts people at risk.*

But we can promise

- We will discuss this with you first and give you support.
- We only share the minimum necessary.
- Your information is only shared with those who need to know.

The Governing Body approved this procedure on date: 12th July 2018

Signed: 

Chair of Governors

Signed: 

Headteacher

Amendment List				
Last Amendment Date	By Whom	Reasons for Amendment	Areas Amended	Policy Owner