



The Redway School
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CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

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Manager
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CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Contents

1. RATIONALE AND STATEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY	3
2. DEFINITION OF CONFIDENTIALITY	3
3. THE POSITION FOR SCHOOL STAFF	4
4. PARENTS AND CARERS	4
5. COMPLEX CASES	5

1. Rationale and Statement on the importance of Confidentiality:

We believe that:

- The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions that staff at The Redway 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 well established to enable pupils, staff and parents / carers to seek help both within and outside school to minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure that our pupils and staff are supported and are safe.
- 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 (for those pupils who are able to do so.)
- The Redway School's attitude to confidentiality is open and easily understood. Everyone should trust the boundaries of confidentiality reporting within school.
- Issues concerning personal information including sex and relationships and other personal matters can arise at any time.
- Everyone in the school community is aware that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.
- Everyone in the school community is aware of the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the school community so as they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any issues they may want to discuss.

2. 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 / her conversation completely secret and discuss it with no one.

In practice, there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is offered at The Redway School. We have to ensure a balance between ensuring the safety, well being and protection of our pupils and staff, ensuring that there is an ethos of trust where pupils and staff can ask for help when they need it, as well as ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information, child protection / safeguarding issues that good practice is followed.

This means that in most cases we are only able to offer limited confidentiality. Disclosure of the content of a conversation could be discussed with professional colleagues but the confider would not be identified except in certain circumstances.

The general rule is that staff should make clear that there are limits to confidentiality. These limits relate to ensuring pupils safety and wellbeing. The pupil will be informed (if appropriate to their level of understanding) when a confidence has to be broken for this reason.

Different levels of confidentiality are appropriate for different circumstances.

One to one disclosures to members of school staff (including volunteers):

- It is essential all members of staff know the limits of the confidentiality they can offer to both pupils and parents / carers and that any required actions or sources of further support or help available both for the pupil or parent / carers and for the staff member within the school and from other agencies, where appropriate.
- Designated Safeguarding Leads in the school are always available to staff for discussion and advice regarding disclosures, information-sharing and confidentiality.

(Note: When concerns for a pupil come to the attention of staff, for example observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure, however insignificant this might appear to be, the member of staff must discuss this with one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads as soon as possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as soon as possible. Please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.)

3. The Position for School Staff:

The staff of The Redway School should not promise complete confidentiality. Pupils do not have the right to expect that incidents will not be reported to their parents / carers and may not assume that information conveyed outside that context is private. No member of The Redway School's staff can or should give such a promise. The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions that staff at The Redway School make regarding confidentiality.

School staff are not obliged to break confidentiality except where child protection or safeguarding is or may be an issue, we believe that it is important that staff are able to share their concerns about our pupils with colleagues in a professional and supportive way, on a need-to-know basis. This will help in ensuring that staff receive the guidance and support they need as well as maintaining the pupil's safety and wellbeing.

Members of staff at The Redway School are expected to respect the confidentiality of the school community as a whole and the pupils at the school. Therefore, the sharing of personal or sensitive information regarding a pupil with anyone outside the school is not permitted. Should a member of staff be found to have disclosed confidential information to an inappropriate source then it will be dealt with through official employment procedures. School staff should discuss such concerns with one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

4. Parents and Carers:

We believe that it is essential to work in close partnership with all our parents and carers. We endeavour to keep parents / carers informed of their child's day at school via the home / school link books, through the work evidence app, and personal contact. We also ensure that parents / carers are kept informed of their progress at school, which includes any concerns, relating to education, behaviour, or their medical needs.

The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions the staff at The Redway School make regarding confidentiality.

There may be some circumstances regarding child protection, safeguarding and disclosure where a decision not to inform parents / carers may be necessary. This decision is only made on the guidance from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Children with Disabilities Social Work Team and / or the Police.

5. Complex Cases:

Where there are areas of doubt about the sharing of information, The Redway School will seek advice from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, Children with Disabilities Social Work Team or the Designated Officer. (LADO)

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- Equalities and Respect Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy