



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

SHINE Multi Academy Trust

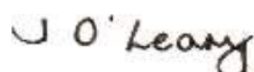
Management log

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Signed



Signed



Chair of the board

CEO

Related Policies

- Complaints
- Dealing with Abusive Parents
- Equality
- Whistleblowing

All above policies are available through our academies local servers, directly through SHINE or through the Trust website www.shine-mat.com

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1. Equal opportunities statement

1.1 The SHINE Multi Academy Trust is committed to promoting equal opportunities and all stakeholders will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

2. Rationale

2.1 SHINE believes that:

2.2 The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils are the paramount considerations in all decisions staff at our academies make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' wellbeing and safety.

2.3 It is an essential part of the ethos of our academies that trust is established, enabling pupils, staff and parents/carers to seek help both within the school and outside it in order to minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure that pupils and staff are supported and safe.

2.4 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.

2.5 SHINE's attitude to confidentiality is easily understood and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality operating within our academies.

2.6 Issues concerning personal information including health, sex and relationships and other personal matters can arise at any time.

2.7 Everyone in the school community needs to know that no-one can offer absolute

confidentiality.

2.8 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.

3. Definition of confidentiality

3.1 Confidentiality is defined as "something which is spoken or given in private, entrusted with another's secret affairs".

3.2 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.

3.3 In practice there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality is offered in our academies. We strive to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, wellbeing 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.

3.4 This means that in most cases what is offered is 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.

3.5 **Note:** Staff should make it clear that there are limits to confidentiality at the beginning of the conversation. These limits relate to ensuring children's safety and wellbeing. The pupil will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason and be involved in the information sharing.

3.6 Different levels of confidentiality are appropriate for different circumstances:

3.6.1 In the classroom in the course of a lesson given by a member of teaching staff or an outside visitor including health professionals.

3.6.1.1 Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson, setting the climate and

establishing ground rules to ensure that confidential disclosures are not made. It should be made clear to pupils that this is not the time or place to disclose confidential personal information. When a health professional is contributing to a school's health education programme in a classroom setting, he/she is working with the same boundaries of confidentiality as a teacher.

3.6.2 One-to-one disclosures to members of school staff

3.6.2.1 It is essential that all members of staff know the limits of the confidentiality they can offer both to pupils and parents/carers as well as any required actions and sources of further support or help available both for the pupil and the parent / carer, within the academy and from other agencies where appropriate. All staff encourage pupils to discuss different issues with their parents/carers and vice versa.

3.6.2.2 However, the needs of the pupil are paramount and 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.

3.6.3 Disclosures to a counsellor, school nurse or health professional operating a confidential service in the school

3.6.3.1 Health professionals such as school nurses can give confidential medical advice to pupils, provided they are competent to do so and follow the Fraser Guidelines (guidelines for doctors and other health professionals on giving medical advice to under 16s). School nurses are skilled in discussing issues and possible actions with young people and always have in mind the need to encourage pupils to discuss issues with their parents or carers. However, the needs of the pupil are paramount, and the school nurse will not insist that a pupil's parents or carers are informed about any advice or treatment they give.

4. The legal position

4.1 For school staff

4.1.1 School staff should not promise confidentiality. Pupils do not have the right to expect they will not be reported to their parents or carers and may not, in the absence of an explicit promise, assume that information conveyed outside that context is private. No member of staff can or should give such a promise.

4.1.2 The safety, wellbeing and protection of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff make about confidentiality.

4.1.3 Staff are not obliged to break confidentiality except where child protection is or may be an issue, however, we believe it is important staff are able to share their concerns about pupils' safety and wellbeing.

4.2 Teachers, counsellors and health professionals

4.2.1 Professional judgement is required by a teacher, counsellor or health professional in considering whether he or she should indicate to a child that the child could make a disclosure in confidence and whether such a confidence could then be maintained having heard the information. In exercising their professional judgement, the teacher, counsellor or health professional must consider the best interests of the child, including the need to both ensure trust to provide safeguards for our children and possible child protection issues.

4.2.2 All teachers receive basic training in child protection as part of their induction and are expected to follow the child protection policy and procedures.

4.3 Counsellors and health professionals

4.3.1 We can offer pupils the support of a school counsellor. The school nursing service operates a drop-in service for pupils. These services are confidential between the counsellor or health professional and the individual pupil. No information is shared with staff **except** as defined in the child protection policy. This is essential to maintain the trust needed for these services to meet the needs of our pupils.

4.4 Visitors and non-teaching staff

4.4.1 We expect all non-teaching staff to report any disclosures of a concerning nature by pupils or parents/carers to the designated child protection co-ordinator as soon as possible after the disclosure and in an appropriate setting, so that others cannot overhear. The designated child protection co-ordinator will decide what, if any, further action needs to be taken.

4.5 Parents/carers

4.5.1 SHINE believes that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and carers and we endeavour to keep them abreast of their child's progress, 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. When a pupil does discuss a difficult personal issue with staff, he or she will be encouraged to also discuss the matter with their parents or carers and may be supported to do so where appropriate.

4.5.2 The safety, wellbeing and protection of pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff make about confidentiality.

4.6 Complex cases

4.6.1 Where there are areas of doubt about the sharing of information, we will consult with the local area safeguarding board.

4.7 Support for staff

4.7.1 SHINE recognises that staff may themselves need support when dealing with some of our pupils' personal issues. Staff risk making poor decisions when they are not aware of all the relevant information or they lack the necessary training. Staff may also find themselves taking home their concerns about pupils. To avoid these outcomes, we encourage staff to seek support from the designated safeguarding lead.

5. Dissemination and implementation

5.1 This policy has been distributed to all teaching and non-teaching staff as part of training on child protection and safeguarding. All new staff receive a copy of the policy when they join SHINE and its academies.