



"Unlocking potential through learning"

Confidentiality Policy

**The New Horizons
Learning Centre**

Date Ratified: September 2021
Review Date: September 2023

Signed by: Donna Portingale

Position: Chair of Governors

Principles:

Trust and confidentiality are key in the building of relationships with pupils and parents within New Horizons Learning Centre. Front-line practitioners who provide services to children, young people and families often have to make decisions on sharing information with other practitioners about those they are involved with. This calls for professional judgement on a case-by-case basis.

Confidentiality may have to be breached at certain times when a child's actions or behaviour has resulted or may result:

- In harm to themselves
- In harm to others
- In harm to the member of staff present
- To prevent a crime taking place either in the present or future
- Or if there is sufficient public interest to share (See Appendix 1)

It is important that all staff are able to share confidential information with their relevant colleagues, outside agencies and line managers to enable them to access such support and advice within a confidential environment.

Aims:

- Clarify NHLC's responsibilities and legal requirements.
- Reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of pupils and all NHLC stakeholders
- Clarify NHLC's approach to confidentiality for all members of the school and wider community.
- Give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the confidentiality issues within the school.
- Enable staff to manage confidentiality related incidents/issues within the school with consistency and in the best interest of all involved.

Practice:

There are times when a member of staff may need, or have a duty, to break confidentiality:

- When the welfare of the young person is threatened
- When there are legal implications to keeping such a confidence.

In all our work the safety & welfare of the child is of **paramount** importance.

There are times when a young child will disclose information to a member of staff which the member of staff believes puts the safety/welfare of that young person at risk. If this happens the member of staff should tell the child of their concerns and that the information cannot be kept confidential.

Examples of when confidentiality may be breached:

- When a young person discloses abuse to either themselves or another child.
- When a child's actions/behaviour has or may
 1. result in harm to themselves
 2. result in harm to others
 3. result in harm to a member of staff

This list is not complete and there may be other occasions when a member of staff feels the need to breach confidentiality.

The child should be informed when confidentiality cannot be kept and all children should be aware of your responsibilities and duties as a member of staff at New Horizons Learning Centre

Confidentiality and Abuse:

It is essential that all staff know South Gloucestershire Council procedures for referral of child abuse/cause for concern.

Children should be told that staff are obliged to pass on any disclosures of abuse.

In cases of suspected or identified abuse:

- follow South Gloucestershire Council Child Protection Guidelines
- inform the member of staff responsible for child protection
- if possible keep the child informed of your actions at all times

Contact with parents:

When working with children it is advisable to involve parents in any decisions concerning their welfare. However, it is sometimes the case that the member of staff judges the family circumstances to be such that parental involvement may further jeopardise the welfare of the young person. In such a case the member of staff should consult with their manager prior to any further action unless there is an emergency.

Prior to contacting parents, 'in all cases' the member of staff should first consult with the child, hoping that it will be done on his/her terms and in the least compromising manner. When informing parents the worker needs to assess how they will respond given the circumstances and incident/s. Parents may need help to explore and come to terms with issues facing a child.

Confidentiality and the media:

No member of staff is permitted to speak to the media without the express permission of the Headteacher or, in her absence, the deputy Headteacher.

Sharing information with other agencies:

Knowing when and how to share information isn't always easy, but it is important to get it right. Children, young people and their families need to feel reassured that their confidentiality is respected. In most cases practitioners will only share information about them with their consent but there may be circumstances when this needs to be overridden. Cross-government guidance has been published to reassure practitioners about:

- When, how and why to share information legally and professionally
- Knowing how to access support and guidance

The key principles of information sharing that practitioners should follow are:

- Is there a legitimate purpose to share the information?
- Does the information enable a person to be identified?
- Is the information confidential?
- If so, is there consent to share?
- Is there a statutory duty or court order to share the information?
- If consent is refused or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there a sufficient public interest to share information?
- If the decision is to share, is the right information being shared in the right way?
- Has the decision been properly recorded?

Monitoring and Review:

This policy relates to the following:

Child Protection Policy

Whistleblowing Policy