



# Les Landes School Confidentiality Policy 2018

UNRC Article 3: Everyone who works with children should do what is best for each child.

## Aims

A clear, explicit and well publicised Confidentiality Policy ensures good practice throughout the school and can easily be understood. The policy should confirm that all members of the school community are clear about the levels of confidentiality that they can offer to other members of the community and expect themselves. This policy should be read in line with the Staff Handbook and other school policies on Child Protection, Safeguarding, Inclusion, Behaviour, and Counter-bullying.

This policy applies to:

- all teaching and non-teaching members of staff working in the school
- visiting staff from external agencies
- parents, students and other volunteers working in school

## Procedures

### Pupils

We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about it to their parents/carers. This can result in enormous stress for the individual which impacts on their education, health and well-being. Some pupils may feel that they can turn to teachers and other staff members for support and we want to be as helpful as we can whilst recognising that there may be some potential consequences. You should adhere to the following procedures:

- when talking with pupils, it is important for you to be aware of maintaining your professional boundaries. Whilst being supportive where you can, distancing techniques should be used when appropriate
- you must be clear to pupils that you cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue
- leading questions should not be asked and records should be taken of any conversations. Records should be passed on to the Headteacher/ Designated Child Protection Lead immediately
- pupils should be warned that if there is a child protection/ safeguarding issue where the pupil, or others, are likely to be at risk of significant harm, you are under a duty of care to inform the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads who may have to involve other agencies. It is important that each member of staff deals with this sensitively and explains to the pupil that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but that they will only tell those who need to know in order to help
- in all cases where you feel that you have to break confidentiality with the pupil, you must inform the pupil, (unless there is a good reason not to inform them e.g. risk of harm) and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained
- in talking with pupils, you need to encourage them to talk to their parents/carers about the issue that may be troubling them and support in doing this should be offered where appropriate

- all pupil records should be disposed of in the appropriate manner following guidance from the Education Department and Retention Schedule

### **Parents/carers and families**

We recognise that sometimes there may be family issues which might affect a pupil and which the family will only disclose to us if they can be sure the information will be treated confidentially. We will respect the wishes of the family and where it is felt necessary to share the information given to us, this will be discussed with the parents/carers first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and/or there is an overriding child protection/ safeguarding concern.

### **Staff**

All staff can normally expect that their personal situations and health will remain confidential unless:

- it impinges on their terms of contract
- endangers pupils or other members of staff
- there is a legal obligation to disclose such information
- it is necessary for legal proceedings or despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure

### **Staffroom**

Staff should be very aware of discussing pupils in the staffroom or other areas around school where they might be in earshot of parents, students or other volunteers.

### **Students**

Students on work placements such as Project Trident should have the Confidentiality Policy clearly outlined to them by the member of staff that is supervising them.

### **Record keeping / paperwork**

Confidential paperwork (e.g. SEN files, Inclusion files, medical information, Child Protection information, staff files) should be stored securely in locked filing cabinets. It should be passed on to the next school/ department securely - marked Private and Confidential.

Confidential paperwork that is no longer needed should be placed in the appropriate bin for shredding.

Highly sensitive information that needs emailing e.g. Child Protection paperwork should be sent password protected.

### **Monitoring and Review**

September 2018

Review September 2019