

TRINITY ACADEMY NEWCASTLE TRUST

Confidentiality Policy

**Approved by the Committee – July 2020
On behalf of the Board of Directors**

Next Review Date – July 2021

Introduction

All Trusts are asked on occasions to keep information confidential. This can relate to a variety of issues including family matters, drug use, abuse or other dangerous or illegal activities. Confidentiality is a whole trust issue, therefore it is important that all members of the school community follow the same clear and explicit policy.

Aims

1. To maintain an ethos of trust within the Trust
2. To protect the learner at all times
3. To reassure the learner that their best interests will be maintained
4. To encourage learners to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems of any sort
5. To give clear guidance to all members of the Trust about confidentiality
6. To give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues
7. To ensure that learners and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
8. To ensure that learners and parents/carers are reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and then supported appropriately
9. To ensure that if there are learner protection issues then the correct procedure is followed (see Child Protection policy)

Process

1. All information about individual learners is private and is only shared with those staff that have a need to know.
2. All social services, medical and personal information about a learner is held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
3. The trust prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are always available to talk to both learners and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern.
4. The trust has a member of staff as Trust Safeguarding Lead (Michelle Higgins)
5. Learner protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken at recommended intervals. (see Child Protection policy).
6. It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters, on a need to know basis, in order to support individuals. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned. These staff will not discuss any sensitive

issues with other staff members who are not party to the information.

7. When volunteers, such as parents and friends of the school are working in classes, they do not discuss educational matters including behaviour issues outside the classroom. They will be asked to sign a confidentiality awareness statement before working in the classroom.

8. Volunteers, learners and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in school.

9. Information about learners is shared with parents/carers but only about the learner. Parents/carers do not have access to any other learner's books, marks and progress grades at any time. However parents/carers are made aware that information about the learner will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.

10. Photographs of learners are not used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and Internet.

11. Board of Directors, in particular those sitting on Discipline Committees, do not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual learners) to any person outside of the meeting.

12. At full board of directors meetings matters such as learner exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be dealt with in the CEO's report under Part 2 confidential. This is not for the knowledge of persons outside the Governing body meeting. Confidential minutes are kept separately and are not published.

13. Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be in the Head of School's office and electronic records will only be available from the Head of School's and Admin Officer's computer.

In Lessons

1. Ground rules and distancing techniques are used where sensitive issues are to be addressed.
2. Staff will not put pressure on learners to disclose personal information and will discourage fellow learners from applying any such pressure.

Personal Disclosures

1. If disclosures from learners take place at an inappropriate place or time the member of staff will try to talk to the learner concerned privately before the end of the day.
2. The member of staff may talk to an appropriate colleague, to decide on a suitable action, without giving the name of the learner.

Equal Opportunities

All learners have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.

However, staff may need to discuss an individual case with a class or group. For instance if it can support the inclusion of a child with Asperger's Syndrome or Autism, if their peers are made aware of the condition and so have some idea of what to expect. Similarly a learner with visual impairment can be supported if his/her friends know how to look out for them in the playground. In such cases permission will be sought from the learner and his/her parents/carers.

Health Professionals

Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality when working in a one to one situation. When working in a classroom they are bound by relevant Trust policies.

References

Guidance to schools on Sex and Relationship Education
What to do if you are worried a child is being abused
Developing sex and relationships education in schools – guidance and training for school governors (National Children's Bureau 2003)
HIV in schools – good practice guide to supporting children infected or affected by HIV (National Children's Bureau 2005)
Sex and Relationships Education in Pupil Referral Units (National Children's Bureau 2004)
National Healthy Schools Status – A Guide for Schools
(www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk August 2005)
Information sharing – 'Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers'
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies: Child Protection; Data Protection; Drugs Policy; Freedom of Information policy; PSHE policy; Data Protection Policy

Signed on behalf of the Board:



Peter Carter (Chairperson of the Board)

Date: July 2020