

Kings Langley School



Sensitive Issues and Confidentiality Policy

Review Date: January 2013

A Policy Title: Sensitive Issues and Confidentiality Policy

Character Development: Commitment to Equality and Diversity

This school is founded on a set of fundamental values designed to enable all students and adults connected with our community to flourish and succeed, regardless of background or circumstances. We are determined to be open to people, places, methods and ideas—and as such, equality and diversity are at the heart of everything we do. Our continued dedication to social justice and equality of opportunity is embodied in everything we do.

We are creating an **inclusive** school community where:

- People are treated with dignity and respect
- Inequalities are challenged
- We anticipate, and respond positively to, different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential
- We value diversity and we recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture, and that this difference brings great strength.
- We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on individual characteristics and circumstances, such as age; disability; caring or dependency responsibilities; gender or gender identity; marriage and civil partnership status; political opinion; pregnancy and maternity; race, colour, caste, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sexual orientation; socio-economic background; trade union membership status or other distinctions, represents a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity for self-fulfilment.
- We recognise that patterns of under achievement at any level and differences in outcomes can be challenged through positive intervention activities designed to bridge gaps.
- We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs. We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile or degrading to others.
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We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in working towards the achievement of our vision.

B Rationale

"We live in a diverse and plural society and in a period to continuous change. We are no longer able to rely on cultural norms to influence our students for good. In western society the influence of authority from home, school and religion are much diminished. Yet our students are still searching for meaning in their lives. They are often keen to take up good causes and are concerned about injustices and the rights of others. It is important that our young people are educated well to discern and to be critical of social

exploitation, and fickle values, and to have the confidence to make informed life choices.” Ofsted Religious Education Report 2004.

A key aim of this policy is to ensure that students receive suitable guidance and support to enable them to develop a range of skills and attributes which will allow them to cope with the inevitable difficulties associated with being part of a modern and diverse community and society. As a school, we intend to provide sensitive but assertive support to students facing particular difficulties in their home or personal life, without crossing the boundaries of personal liberty or reasonable privacy.

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of “ensuring the happiness of every individual in our community”, to promote a climate which enables all students to flourish, regardless of ability or special needs, and supports our desired outcomes of developing “strong character”.

C Purpose

We will ensure that:

- Staff are aware that in PSHE and Citizenship and especially in the field of Sex and Relationships Education they may well have to deal with sensitive and/or controversial issues
- Students are made aware of generally accepted moral guidance (as expressed in the school's other policy statements and Christian and other religious teachings) and relevant aspects of the Law, as they relate to issues being discussed for example, about relationships, partnerships, marriage and marital breakdown, about divorce, pre- and extra-marital sex, abortion, in-vitro fertilisation; about rape, contraception and sex-related diseases. Other issues that may be touched upon might refer to the impact of substance abuse on individual or family life; wide variations in socio economic background and its impact on development and life opportunities; bereavement or exceptional loss and aspects relating to “children in care”.
- All issues and any wider questions are dealt with in a careful and balanced way, free from sensationalism and personal bias. Account will be taken of different viewpoints as expressed in a variety of different religions and multi cultural sources.
- Staff are sensitive to the different levels of maturity and experience of the students
- Ground rules, negotiated between teachers and students, will be used when dealing with sensitive/controversial issues thus creating a supportive climate for discussion (see Appendix)

- Where possible, students will be entitled to reasonable levels of confidentiality *but must always be reminded that such confidentiality cannot be guaranteed*. For example, where revealed information clashes with aspects of the law or places the child or others at risk or potential harm. Students should be reminded of this *before* they reveal potentially confidential or sensitive information. Members of staff should always seek further advice and guidelines from members of the SLT (senior leadership team) if they feel uncomfortable in dealing with any specific issue.
- Appropriate advice and support is available to staff when requested
- A member of the SLT will be available to discuss matters relating to Sensitive/Controversial issues with parents/carers

D Guidelines

- The Headteacher will ensure that parents are adequately informed and consulted about this policy (usually in conjunction with review of the school's SRE policy) by arranging a suitable evening (held annually) to present the policy and facilitate discussion and consultation on all connected issues.
- No one (teacher or students) will have to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion by contributing.
- Explanations will take place in a sensible and factual way.
- Children with personal or sensitive concerns or questions can seek help from the School Nurse, School Counsellor, GP or other professionals such as the Connexions Advisor or visiting support personnel.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's **SRE (Sex and Relationship Education) Policy** and **Children at Risk Policy**.