

**“Enjoying ‘life in all its fullness’ by achieving your personal best!”**



## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

THE HEREFORD ACADEMY

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 At the Hereford Academy we believe in the following principles:

The safety, well being and protection of our students are the paramount consideration in all decisions at this academy about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between academy staff is an essential element in ensuring our students well being and safety.

It is an essential part of the ethos of the academy that trust is established to enable students, staff and parents/ carers to seek help both within and outside the academy in order to minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure that students are supported and safe.

Students, parents/ carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable discussing personal issues including sex and relationships.

The academy's attitude to confidentiality is easily understood and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the academy.

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

Everyone in the academy community needs to know that no-one can offer absolute confidentiality.

Everyone in the academy community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the academy community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about health, sex and relationships or other personal issues they want to discuss.

### **2. The policy relates to the following:**

- 2.1 All Teaching and Associate Staff
- 2.2 All visiting staff who are working with young people on the academy site
- 2.3 All staff who are from training institutions and who are undertaking GTP process

- 2.4 All staff from external agencies who deliver services on the academy site
- 2.5 Adult and student mentors
- 2.6 Governors

### **3. Responding to student disclosure**

- 3.1 Staff should make it clear that there are limits to confidentiality at the beginning of the conversation. These limits relate to ensuring young people's safety and well being. The student will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason and be involved in the information sharing.
- 3.2 When talking with students it is important for you to be aware of maintaining professional boundaries. Whilst being supportive, professional distance must be maintained and students encouraged to access confidential services offered in the Infozone, the Key Stage Team or with the CPM (Child Protection Manager).
- 3.3 You must make it clear to students you cannot offer **unconditional** confidentiality.
- 3.4 Students must be made aware that if the member of staff thinks that it is a child protection issue they will inform the academy's CPM as soon as possible.
- 3.5 Students must be made aware that staff can only offer confidentiality within the academy if the activity does not involve significant illegal actions (e.g. drug trafficking or arson) or a child protection issue.
- 3.6 If you feel the need to break the student's confidence you must inform the student and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.
- 3.7 Students should be encouraged to share their concerns with parents/ carers or alternatively confidential services such as the academy nurse, Connexions, GP or the young people's drop in service at the Infozone.

### **4. Academy Nurse and the Academy based health service**

- 4.1 Health professionals such as nurses can give confidential medical advice to students provided they are competent to do so.
- 4.2 They must follow the "Fraser Guidelines" (guidelines for all health professionals on giving medical advice to young people under 16)
- 4.3 Health professionals should have in mind the need to encourage students to discuss issues with their parents/carers.
- 4.4 The needs of the student are paramount, however, and a health professional will not insist that a student's parent/ carer are informed about advice or treatment.

### **5. Contraceptive advice and pregnancy**

- 5.1 The Department of Health issued guidance in July 2004 that confirms that health professionals owe young people under 16 the same duty of care and confidentiality as older patients

- 5.2 The duty of care applies to all under 16's
- 5.3 Whether a young person is competent to consent to treatment or is in serious danger is judged by the health professional on each individual case, not solely on the age of the patient.
- 5.4 Health professionals must take time to explore whether there may be coercion or abuse. Cases of concern should be referred through child protection procedures with the Academy's CPM and the Local Authority.

## **6. Connexions**

This service is similar to that of the school nurse in offering support and an opportunity for young people to discuss issues  
Confidentiality cannot be kept if a Child Protection issue is disclosed.  
Cases of concern should be referred through child protection procedures with the Academy's CPM and the Local Authority.

## **7. Student and Adult Mentors**

- 7.1 This service is similar to that of Connexions in offering support and an opportunity for young people to discuss issues
- 7.2 Mentors should make it clear that there are limits to confidentiality at the beginning of the conversation. These limits relate to ensuring young people's safety and well being. The student will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason and be involved in the information sharing.
- 7.3 Confidentiality cannot be kept if a Child Protection issue is disclosed. Cases of concern should be referred through child protection procedures to the Head of Key Stage who will then refer to the Academy's CPM.
- 7.4 Confidentiality should be covered in any mentors' training

## **8. Complex Cases**

- 8.1 Where there are areas of doubt about the sharing of information the Hereford Academy's CPM will consult with the named Local Authority Officer to decide on the next stage of appropriate action.

## **9. Parents/ Carers**

We recognise that sometimes there are family issues which may affect a student at the Academy. The family will only disclose to us if they are confident that the information remains confidential.  
Such information will be treated sensitively and discussed with the parent/ carer if the need is felt to share the information.  
This does not apply if the student is considered to be at immediate risk or a child protection concern and must be made clear to the parent/ carer

## **10. Staff and Governors**

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

- It impinges on the terms of their contract (staff only)
- It endangers students or other members of staff

There is a legal obligation to disclose such information  
It is necessary for legal proceedings  
Despite the duty of confidence it is in the staff member's interests,  
governor's interests or the wider public interest to justify disclosure

**11. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.

**12. Named staff to monitor policy: S. Kowal (CPM)**