

School Name:	Colaiste Treasa, Kanturk, County Cork
Purpose:	<p>The purpose of our school’s confidentiality policy is to outline and clarify information and procedures around confidentiality for all stakeholders within our school community.</p> <p>This policy outlines all aspects involved in confidentiality within the school and should be read in conjunction with other school policies.</p>
Context:	<p>Colaiste Treasa is a co-educational, multicultural second level school established in 1938. It is under the auspices of Cork Education and Training Board. We are multid denominational. We provide a diverse and broad range of subjects for our students. We aim to support all students in their academic efforts with a view to ensuring that each student reaches his/her potential in a safe and caring environment.</p> <p>This confidentiality policy is written in the context of contemporary legislation and other relevant publications.</p>
Confidentiality & the role of staff:	<p>The safety and welfare of children is the key principle underlying all decision making within our school in line with the Child Care Act 1991 and the Children First Act (2015)</p> <p>Our school adopts a student-centred approach to education.</p> <p>Support of students is paramount in our school community.</p> <p>The Children First Guidelines (2017) are applied in our school as appropriate.</p> <p>All staff members must be aware that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.</p> <p>In supporting the student of our school, all stakeholders must be aware of the limits to confidentiality.</p> <p>This includes a legal obligation to share information where a student’s welfare is at risk.</p> <p>In the case where any member of the school community is aware of a concern to child welfare and safety this concern must be reported to one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in our school: Mr John Murphy (Principal) (ii) The Deputy Designated Liaison Person: Ms Veronica Walsh (Deputy Principal)

(iii) Child and Family Agency Child Protection Social Work Services: Any stakeholder can report a child protection concern about a student or school directly to the by contacting the local social work office.

In cases where school personnel have a concern about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to Tusla, the designated liaison person shall seek advice from Tusla.

In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, and it is not possible to contact Tusla, An Garda Síochána shall be contacted immediately. This may be done at any Garda Station. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending Tusla intervention.

It is not the responsibility of school personnel to assess or investigate or to make enquiries of parents/carers, and in some cases, it could be counterproductive for them to do so. It is a matter for Tusla to assess and investigate suspected abuse and neglect and determine what action it shall take.

<p>Additional information for learners under 18 years of age:</p>	<p>All information regarding concerns of possible child abuse or neglect should be shared only on a 'need to know' basis in the interests of the child.</p> <p>Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 states that it is good practice to inform the parent/carer that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision to make the report. However, Children First National Guidance 2017 notes that it is not necessary to inform a parent/carer that a report is being made -</p> <p>(a) if by doing so, the child will be placed at further risk (b) in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment (c) if the reporter is of the reasonable opinion that by doing so it may place the reporter at risk of harm from the family.</p> <p>Where there is any doubt as to whether to inform a parent/carer that a report is being made concerning his or her child the advice of Tusla shall be sought.</p>
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<p>Confidentiality and learners Over 18:</p>	<p>It is recognised that our school may cater for adult pupils with additional vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Where a vulnerable adult may have been, is being, or is at future risk of being abused or neglected - the advice of the HSE, or if necessary, An Garda Síochána should be sought.</p> <p>Further information in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults is available on the website of the HSE www.hse.ie</p>
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<p>Links between this policy and other policies:</p>	<p>This confidentiality policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour • Additional Educational Needs • Admissions • Whole School Guidance
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<p>Communicating the limits to confidentiality with staff</p>	<p>The limits to all staff-student confidentiality are made clear to the staff on an annual basis at the first staff meeting of the year.</p> <p>Staff should consult a member of management if they have any questions or concerns about our school's confidentiality policy</p>
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<p>Communicating the limits to confidentiality with students and parents/guardians</p>	<p>The limits to all staff-student confidentiality are made clear to students & parents/guardians in our school in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents/Guardians sign a ‘Confidentiality Agreement’ when a student first registers as a student in the school. - Students are reminded about confidentiality at their first assembly of every school year - A ‘limits to confidentiality’ sign is on display in the Guidance Counsellors office <p>There are limits to confidentiality within our school. Under circumstances where an individual is at risk of significant harm, a duty exists on the part of those with information to alert others to the risk perceived.</p>
<p>What to do when an issue arises:</p>	<p>TUSLA the Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána are the two key authorities. TUSLA the Child and Family Agency has a duty to assess reports regarding a child’s welfare or safety.</p> <p>The specific focus of An Garda Síochána is on the investigation of alleged offences and whether a crime has been committed.</p>
<p>Responsibilities in relation to the policy:</p>	<p>The following staff members are involved in the development, implementation and review of the policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Murphy (Principal) • Veronica Walsh (Deputy Principal) • Fiona Goulding (Guidance Counsellor) • Anne O’Connell (SEN Team) • Karen McAuliffe (SEN Team)
<p>Accessibility:</p>	<p>A hard-copy of this policy is held in the Principal’s office. The policy is available to staff, parents and students on request.</p>
<p>Date policy ratified by BOM:</p>	
<p>Date for review of policy:</p>	