



RATIONALE

Confidentiality is a fundamental attribute of any professional organisation. The protection of confidential information relating to others is a serious moral, professional, ethical and legal responsibility that our school recognises and upholds.

Hamilton Special Developmental School is cognisant of its obligations under the **Child Safe Standards** (Ministerial Order 870 – effective August 1, 2016) to protect students from all forms of child abuse. To this end, all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure that our handling of confidential matters pose no risk to child safety.

AIMS

At all times Hamilton Special Developmental School (HSDS) will adhere to the DET guidelines for staff and students' confidential matters. This policy should be implemented in alignment with:

1. DET PROTECT Guidelines;
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/default.aspx?Redirect=1>
2. VRQA Child Safe Standards;
<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/default.html>
3. DET Requests for Information About Students Policy:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/requestinfo.aspx>
4. DET Infectious Disease Policy:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/pages/infectiousdiseases.aspx>
5. DET Photographing and Filming Students Policy:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/photoandfilm.aspx>
6. HSDS's Mandatory Reporting Policy
7. Any other current or future policy related to the confidentiality and the rights of staff, students, parents, and visitors of our school

Hamilton Special Developmental School staff will ensure that confidential information is managed in a manner consistent with community expectations, professional standards and legal obligations.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Confidential information at our school may only be transferred from one person to another when it is professionally appropriate and legally acceptable to do so.
2. All staff will be reminded regularly about workplace confidentiality and professional expectations, as well as privacy obligations as detailed in the Information Privacy Act - 2000.
3. All highly confidential information relating to any current or past parents, families, students or staff members will be maintained in individual files in the school office or within school archives, and can only be accessed with the principal's approval.
4. Staff subsequently accessing confidential files must seek permission from the principal.
5. Staff members provided with confidential documentation relating to students or families should present the documentation to the principal so that it can be retained on the confidential individual files.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY



6. Staff members are to direct any requests for confidential information to the principal.
7. Staff members will not disclose confidential information about students, families or staff, or be drawn into discussions about students, families or staff, with any third person or agency, which has no legal or compelling need to discuss such issues.
8. While staff members may have confidential discussions with others, particularly students, all staff members are compelled to report all disclosures of intentions to self-harm or to harm others.
9. Breaches of confidentiality relating to complaints, staff selection or staff performance etc. are all serious offences.
10. The principal will thoroughly investigate any alleged breaches of confidentiality or privacy.
11. The HSDS Student Code of Conduct will make reference to each student's responsibilities relating to their own confidential information, and the confidentiality rights of others.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as a part of the school's three year policy review cycle.