

# Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

## Confidentiality and client access to records

### Policy statement

Our setting is committed to protecting the privacy, dignity and rights of all children and their families. We recognise that staff and managers hold a confidential relationship with families and must handle information with professionalism, integrity, and lawful practice.

We ensure that parents and carers can share information with confidence, knowing it will be used only to support their child's welfare, learning, and safety. All information is stored, processed, and shared in accordance with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)
- Ofsted requirements (2025)
- London Borough of Bromley information-sharing expectations

We maintain secure systems for managing children's records and uphold the highest standards of confidentiality, record-keeping, and information governance.

### Confidentiality procedures

#### **General Confidentiality Principles**

- Information shared by families with the setting is treated as confidential, except where there is a legal or safeguarding requirement to share it.
- Information may be passed to other professionals (e.g., social care, health visitors, police, SEND professionals) only when necessary, lawful, and in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Information Sharing Policy.
- We always clarify with parents whether information they provide should be treated as confidential.

#### **Information Sharing**

- We follow the "seven golden rules" of information sharing (HM Government) and Bromley's local safeguarding partnership guidance.
- Information is only shared:
  - on a need-to-know basis,
  - where it supports the child's welfare, learning, or safety,
  - when consent has been obtained wherever appropriate, or
  - when there is a lawful basis for sharing without consent (e.g., safeguarding concerns).

## Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

### **Parent-to-Parent Information**

- If parents choose to share personal information about themselves with other parents, the setting cannot be held responsible if those parents share that information further.
- Group discussions (e.g., workshops, support groups) have a confidentiality agreement; however, the setting cannot guarantee participants will always uphold this.

### **Recording Confidential Information**

Parents are informed when we need to record confidential information beyond standard personal details, including:

- Injuries, disclosures or welfare concerns
- Significant changes in the child's home life
- Records relating to child protection concerns
- Correspondence or meetings with external professionals

We always explain:

- Why the information is being recorded
- How it will be used
- Who it may be shared with

All recording follows our Children's Records Policy and Privacy Notice.

### **Secure Storage of Information**

- All children's records are stored securely in locked cabinets or password-protected digital systems compliant with UK GDPR.
- Staff may type reports or letters digitally; electronic drafts are deleted securely when no longer needed.
- No confidential information is stored on personal devices.
- Access to records is strictly limited to authorised staff.

### **Staff Confidentiality and Information Access**

- Staff discuss children's general progress in team meetings; sensitive information is restricted to the Manager, Deputy, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the child's Key Person.
- Staff do not discuss any child with:
  - staff not involved in that child's care,
  - other parents,
  - any unauthorised individual.
- Discussions with external professionals occur in a formal, professional context only.

### **Managing Third-Party Information**

- When third-party information is shared with us, staff check whether it is confidential and whether consent is required before further sharing.
- Third parties may include:

## Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

- family members
- social workers
- health professionals
- educational professionals

### Client access to records procedures

Parents/carers with parental responsibility have the right to request access to records held about their child. The following procedure ensures compliance with UK GDPR:

#### **Making a Request**

- Requests must be made in writing to the Setting Manager and will be acknowledged in writing.
- We will respond within one month, with the option to extend by a further two months for complex or multiple requests, in line with UK GDPR.
- A fee may be charged for excessive or repetitive requests.

#### **Preparing the File**

The Manager and Deputy:

- Review the file to ensure it is complete, well-ordered and accurate.
- Identify all references to third parties.
- Seek advice where necessary, including legal advice for complex cases.

#### **Third-Party Consent**

- Third parties (family members, other agencies, staff) are contacted in writing to request consent to share information relating to them.
- Agencies (e.g., social care, health services) often refuse consent and direct parents to make a request directly to them.

#### **Redaction and "Clean Copy" Preparation**

- All information for which consent is refused is redacted (names and details removed).
- Staff names may also be redacted if disclosure could cause risk, relates to sensitive safeguarding information, or is part of a police investigation.
- A clean copy of the file is prepared that includes only information recorded directly by the setting.

#### **Viewing the File**

- Parents are invited to a meeting with the Manager/Deputy to view the clean file and discuss its contents.
- Only individuals with parental responsibility, or their legal representative/interpreter, may attend.
- Parents may take a copy of the clean file following the discussion.

# Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

## **Disputes, Corrections and Complaints**

- Parents may request corrections of factual inaccuracies.
- Professional opinions or observations will not be changed, but parents' views will be added to the file where appropriate.
- Complaints about the content or handling of records should follow the setting's Complaints Procedure.

## **Safeguarding Priority**

All processes above remain subject to our overriding duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Information will always be shared without delay where a child's safety is at risk.

## **Legal framework**

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)

## **Further guidance**

- Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners (HM Government)
- London Borough of Bromley Local Safeguarding Procedures
- ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) Helpline: 0303 123 1113