



Safeguarding children

1.5 Information sharing policy and procedures

Policy statement

The over-riding concern of the setting is the safety and well-being of the child, and any decisions we take about sharing information has this in mind.

Usually, we only share information with consent from the parents

Parents have a right to know that the information they share with us will be regarded as confidential and that they will be informed when we are obliged to share this information.

The reasons why we might share information without consent

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation when:

- We are preventing a crime from being committed, or where one may have been committed, or to prevent harm to a child or adult.
- When not sharing information could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

Who takes the decision to share without consent?

The decision will never be made by an individual but by the management team.

The three criteria we use to assess whether we should share information without consent are:

1. Where there is *evidence* that the child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
2. Where there *is reasonable cause to believe* that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.
3. To *prevent* significant harm arising to children or adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

Procedures



1. Be open and honest. Explain to families how, when and why information will be shared about them and with whom. Seek consent to share information, unless it puts the child at risk or undermines a criminal investigation. At School House Nurseries we ensure parents:
 - a. Receive information about our information sharing policy when starting at the setting and they sign a form to say that they understand circumstances when the information may be shared without their consent. This will only be when it is a matter of safeguarding a child or vulnerable adult. This is on our registration form.
 - b. Have information about our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy.
 - c. Have information about the circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with regard to any special needs the child may have or transition to school.
2. Share with consent where appropriate. Respect the wishes of children and parents not to consent to share confidential information. However, in the interests of the child, you should know when it is reasonable to override their wish.
3. Seek advice when there are doubts about possible significant harm to a child or others.
 - a. Staff should liaise with the Manager.
 - b. Managers should contact children's social care for advice where they have doubts or are unsure.
4. Managers should be able to advise staff on when to share without consent. Consider the safety and welfare of the child when making a decision about sharing information – if there are concerns regarding 'significant harm' the child's well being and safety is paramount.
5. Any information shared should be accurate and up-to-date; it must be shared for a good reason, shared securely, and shared only with those who need to know.
6. Reasons for decisions to share information, or not, are recorded in line with the policy '5.1 The storing and sharing of information on children, families and staff'. This means you should:
 - a. Record concerns and discuss these with the setting's Manager.
 - b. Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom.

7. If the decision to share information is related to Safeguarding our Safeguarding Lead must be informed.

Questions to ask yourself when sharing information

In addition to considering the safety and well-being of the child you should also consider the following questions when thinking about sharing information:

- Is there a legitimate reason to share the information?
- Does the information enable the person to be identified?
- Is the information confidential?
- If the information is confidential, do we have consent to share?
- Is there a statutory duty or court order to share information?
- If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest to share information?
- If the decision is to share, are we sharing the right information in the right way?
- Have we properly recorded our decision?

This policy was updated and reviewed in:

Reviewed date	Name	Signature
September 2015	Stuart Watt	
May 2016	Stuart Watt	
August 2016	Stuart Watt	
September 2016	Stuart Watt	
April 2017	Stuart Watt	
April 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
August 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
April 2019	Lindy Baldwin	
May 2019	Stuart Watt	
January 2020	Stuart Watt	
January 2021	Stuart Watt	
January 2022	Stuart Watt	
March 2023	Stuart Watt	