



Information Sharing Policy

West Byfleet Nursery recognises that parents have a right to know that information they share will be regarded as confidential. However, there are certain circumstances when we share information with parents' consent and there are also circumstances when we are obligated to share information without parental consent. This policy details both sets of circumstances and should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Children Policy.

West Byfleet Nursery follows the guidance as outlined in the government document, Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing Safeguarding services (2018) and has due regard for the 'Golden Rules of Information Sharing':

- We have due regard to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act (2018) and are registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO)
- We are open and honest, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so e.g., if there is a belief that the child is at risk of significant harm.
- We seek advice when necessary.
- We share information with consent when appropriate.
- We consider the safety and well-being of all relevant parties.
- We ensure that the information shared is, relevant, proportionate, accurate, timely and secure (for instance, the information shared is up to date and shared only with those who need to know).
- We maintain accurate records of all decisions regarding information sharing and the reasons for these decisions.
- We will also refer to the guidance set down in Surrey's Multi-Agency Information Sharing Protocol (2014, version 5.0).

These documents are available online and paper copies are available for reference in the nursery office.

Some information may be stored electronically. Where this is necessary data is encrypted and any transfer is made using secure encrypted channels.

Information sharing with consent

When a child moves on from West Byfleet Nursery, we share information about their progress and development with the next pre-school provider or school. We also share information with other settings where a child attends more than one setting. Parents are asked to give written consent to sharing child development summaries and to sharing information about any additional needs their child may have. On occasions, we may agree with parents to discuss particular issues with the new setting or school, where this may affect the child's transition.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that other information about their child which may affect their progress is communicated to the next setting/school. This includes health and allergy issues and family circumstances such as illness, bereavement, divorce, and separation.

We may also share information about a child's progress and development with professionals from external agencies for example, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, or an

Early Years Education Effectiveness Advisors etc. If it is felt necessary to complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) this must be carried out with parental consent. The EHA is a tool designed to help practitioners and families assess needs that are either unclear or are not being currently met.

Information sharing without consent

We are obligated to share confidential information **without** consent from the person who provided it, or to whom it relates, if this will prevent harm to a child, or if failure to do so could worsen the outcome for the child. GDPR provide a framework to ensure that personal information about people is shared appropriately.

The three critical criteria informing the decision to share information about a child with other services are:

- Evidence that the child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.
- Reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- To prevent significant harm arising to the child.

In all of the above instances Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and procedures will be followed.

Significant harm to young children can occur for several reasons; it is not restricted to cases of deliberate abuse. For example, if a very young infant is failing to thrive there may be a medical reason for this. If however, the parents/carers are unwilling to consent to medical investigations then it may be appropriate to share this information, thereby protecting the infant from the potential effects of an underlying medical condition.

Information must also be shared where there is a court order in place requesting the sharing of information about a child and/or family.

A decision to share information **without** consent is never taken lightly; all staff always put the safety and well-being of children first. Careful record keeping of any concerns helps to support any decision for sharing information without consent. Details of our record keeping procedures are also contained in the Safeguarding Children Policy.

Signed: Ruth Claydon Date: 13th November 2023

Next Review: October 2024