

St Matthew's Pre-School

7.7 Information sharing

Policy statement

We recognise that parents have a right to know that information they share will be regarded as confidential as well as be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information.

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it or to whom it relates if it is in the public interest. That is when:

- it is to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult; or
- not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

The three critical criteria are:

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

Procedures

Our procedure is based on the 10 golden rules for information sharing as set out in the MAISP document.

- Our policy and procedures on information sharing provide guidance to appropriate sharing of information with external agencies.

In our setting we ensure parents:

- receive information about our information sharing policy when starting their child in preschool and they sign a form to say that they *understand* circumstances when 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;
- have information about our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy; and
- 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.
- DSL (Mrs Allison Warner) to contact The Single Point of Access Team (C SPA) 0300 470 9100 for advice where there are doubts or she is unsure.

We 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, know when it is reasonable to override their wish

In preschool we:

- record concerns and discuss these with the setting's DSL (*Mrs Allison Warner*) for child protection matters. Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom; and

- follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping. (See Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy)
- Our Child Protection procedure and Record Keeping procedure sets out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.
- Should a child be placed on a Child Protection Plan their records will be sent to the new setting when they leave pre-school. If this is not possible then records are sealed and kept until the child's 26th Birthday.
- Other concerns that have not been escalated to Child Protection will be destroyed when the child leaves the setting.

Consent

We understand the safeguarding children takes priority over the consent to share and always put the child's needs first. Parents have a right to be informed that their consent to share information will be sought in most cases, as well as the kinds of circumstances when their consent may not be sought, or their refusal to give consent may be overridden. We do this as follows:

- Our policies and procedures set out our responsibility regarding gaining consent to share information and when it may not be sought or overridden.
- Parents sign a form at registration to say they understand this.

We consider the following questions when we need to share:

- Is there legitimate purpose to sharing the information?
- Does the information enable the person to be identified?
- Is the information confidential?
- If the information is confidential, do you 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 you sharing the right information in the right way?
- Have you properly recorded your decision?

All the undertakings above help to ensure preschool's commitment to the safety and well-being of the child. Please also see our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of St Matthew's Pre-School (name of provider)

Held on _____ (date)

Date to be reviewed _____ (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory
