Confidentiality Policy

Statement of intent

In our setting, staff and managers can be said to have a confidential relationship with families. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers, while ensuring that they access high quality early years care and education in our setting.

Aim

We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share confidential information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children. There are record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements, including the means of storing and sharing that information within the framework of the General Data Protection Regulation and the Human Rights Act.

Confidentiality Procedures

☐ We will assume that information shared by parents with us is confidential information, unless and until notified or demonstrated to be otherwise.

☐ Some parents sometimes share confidential information about themselves with other parents as well as staff. Marsh Green Pre-school cannot be held responsible if confidential information is shared beyond those parents whom the person has confided in.

☐ Information shared between parents in a discussion group is usually bound by a shared understanding that such information is to be treated as confidential information.

☐ We shall inform parents when we need to record confidential information beyond the general personal information that we keep (see below on Record Keeping Methods): for example, with regard to any injuries, concerns or changes in relation to the child or the family, any discussions with parents on sensitive matters, any records we are obliged to keep regarding action taken in respect of child protection and any contact and correspondence with external agencies in relation to their child.

Record Keeping Methods

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

1.   Developmental records

☐ These include observations of children in the setting, samples of their work, summary developmental reports.

☐ They are usually kept in the cupboard in the main room and can be accessed, and contributed to, by staff, the child and the child's parents.

2.   Personal records

☐ These include registration and admission forms, signed consents, including photographic and email addresses and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters.

☐ These confidential records are stored in a lockable filing cabinet.

☐ Parents have access, in accordance with the access to records procedure, to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.

☐ Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.

Other records

☐ Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.

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- Students on Early Years Alliance or other recognised qualifications and training, when they are observing in the setting, are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

- Staff are not permitted to use personal cameras or mobile phone cameras on the premises.

Access to personal records

Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family following the procedure below.

- Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the manager.

- The manager informs the chair of the trustees and sends a written acknowledgement.

- The setting commits to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.

- The manager and chair of the trustees prepare the file for viewing.

- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. A copy of these letters is retained on the file.

- 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.

- It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.

- When all consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.

- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.

- The manager and chair of the trustees go through the file and remove any confidential information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and confidential information they have added to the file.

- What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.

- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the manager, so that it can be explained.

- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency.

- All information is covered by the General Data Protection Regulation.

- Mrs Julie Partridge is the Data Controller.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please see also our policy on Child Protection.

This policy was reviewed and adopted at a committee meeting of	**Marsh Green Pre School CIO**
Held on (date)	
Signed:	
	(Manager)
Signed:	
	(Chairperson)