



EYFS: The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements
3.70

Child Protection

3a.5 Confidentiality and Client Access to Records

Policy Statement

- *Definition:* 'Confidential information is information of some sensitivity, which is not already lawfully in the public domain or readily available from another public source, and which has been shared in a relationship where the person giving the information understood it would not be shared with others.' (Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide)
- At Auden Place Community Nursery, staff and management 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 at the nursery.
- We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their 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, means of storing and sharing that information take place within the framework of the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act.

Confidentiality Procedures

- We always check whether parents regard the information they share with us to be regarded as confidential or not.
- Some parents sometimes share information about themselves with other parents as well as staff. The nursery cannot be held responsible if information is shared beyond those parents whom the person has 'confided' in.
- Information shared between parents in a discussion or training group is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not to be discussed outside of it.
- We inform parents when we need to record confidential information beyond the general personal information we keep (see our record keeping procedures). – for example with regard to any injuries, concerns or changes in relation to the child or the family, any discussion 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.
- We keep all records securely (see our record keeping procedures).
- When conducting handovers or any other meetings involving parents, staff and children, all parties are aware of their surroundings, and change these if needed. I.e, if parents would like to meet privately in a closed office, these are available

Client Access to Records Procedures

Parents may request access to any confidential 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 nursery manager.



- The nursery manager informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
- To nursery commits to providing access within 14 days, although this may be extended.
- The nursery manager and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. Copies of these letters are retained on 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 the consents/refusals to disclose have been received they are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is then taken.
- The nursery manager and chairperson of the management committee go through the file and remove any 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 information they have added to the file.
- What remains is the information recorded by the nursery, 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 invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the nursery 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 nursery or another (third party) agency.

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 also see Policy 3a.2 – Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Information on Staff, Volunteers and Students Procedures

- All information received regarding staff is strictly confidential, although some information may need to be passed on to members of the management committee or room seniors e.g. anything that may affect a staff member's ability to carry out their role. Information is kept securely by the manager.
- The management committee will also be able to access all information together with the manager as they are the employer and are responsible for retaining relevant information on their employees.
- Information about individual staff will not be passed to a third party without their permission.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Students/Volunteers are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it when they are observing in the Nursery

Legal Framework

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998