

# Information Sharing Policy

**Revised:** July 2020

**INFORMATION SHARING POLICY**

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Information and Records.

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met.

*‘Practitioners needs to understand their organisations position and commitment to information sharing. They need to have confidence in the continued support of their organisation where they have used their professional judgement and shared information professionally.’*

*Information Sharing Guidance: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)*

**Policy Statement**

At Chance 2 Change, we recognise that parents have a right to know the information they share with us will be regarded as confidential, as well as to be informed about the circumstances when and the reasons why, 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 to intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult; or

• not sharing it could be worse that the outcome of having shared it.

The decision should never be made as an individual, but with the back-up of the management team.

The three critical criteria are:

• Where there is evidence that a child is suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

• Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.

• To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

**Procedure**

Our procedure is based on:

1. The seven golden rules for information sharing as set out in, Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DSCF 2008).
2. Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018.
3. Data Protection Act, 2018 and GDPR.
4. The current Chance 2 Change Safeguarding and Child protection policy.

**Liaison with Other Agencies**

The unit will:

Work to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all pupils.

Co-operate as required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, with key agencies in their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance and providing written reports at child protection conferences and core groups.

Notify the relevant Children’s Social Care Unit immediately if:

* it should have to exclude a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed term or permanently).
* there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.
* there is any change in circumstances to a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

**Record Keeping**

A new version of Working Together to Safeguard Children was published in July 2018, to account for changes following the Children and Social Work Act 2017; and an update to the government’s guidance on Information Sharing, to account for the new Data Protection Act 2018, and the General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR. KCSIE 2018 reflects this new legislation and guidance. Neither GDPR or the Data Protection Act 2018, prevents or limits the sharing of information to keep children safe. Paragraph 77 sets out the ‘Special Category Personal Data’, which allows sharing information even without consent in some circumstances.

The unit will:

Keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records (AP Tracker) of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children’s Social Care immediately.

Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked location (both online and on paper).

Ensure all relevant child protection records are sent to the receiving establishment when a pupil leaves and confirmation of receipt is obtained.

In addition to the safeguarding file, the DSL will consider sharing relevant information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving if it enables them to support victims of abuse or students that are more vulnerable by having support in place for when the child arrives.

The unit will not destroy any records linked to sexual abuse due to the ongoing Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

LSCBs have transitioned into local safeguarding partnerships of the local authority, police and clinical commissioning groups. The unit will fully engage with the local partnership.

**Confidentiality and information sharing**

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the EU general data protection regulation 2016/679 (GDPR), which took effect on the 25th May 2018. This does not prevent the unit staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the above, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parents to see child protection requests, they will refer the request to the Designated Person or SLT.

The Unit will:

Ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from a senior manager or MASH as required.

**Information sharing**

**Guidance for practitioners and managers** is available from Department of Education - [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

Ensure that SLT or Designated Person will only disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a ‘need to know’ basis, including Domestic Violence notifications.

Make all staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

Ensure staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets and that they have a duty to keep children safe and this could involve sharing information with other professionals.

**Communication with Family/Carers**

The Unit will:

Ensure that family/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the unit and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties in Chance 2 Change newsletters/website

Undertake appropriate discussion with family/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action. If the unit believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the situation, advice will be sought from MASH *(Further guidance on this can be found in the Core Inter-agency Procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board* [*http://lutonlscb.org.uk/about-us/policies-and-procedures/*](http://lutonlscb.org.uk/about-us/policies-and-procedures/)*).*