

Date Reviewed	June 2023
Review Date	June 2024



Agreed by: Steering Committee

Date: 09/08/23

Name: Sally Evans

Signature:

Information Sharing Policy

June 2023

Poor or non-existent information sharing is a factor repeatedly identified as an issue in Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) carried out following the death of or serious injury to, a child. In some situations, sharing information can be the difference between life and death. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect. Every practitioner must take responsibility for sharing the information they hold, and cannot assume that someone else will pass on information, which may be critical to keeping a child safe.

Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018)

Policy Statement

We recognise that parents have a right to know that 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 could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

The decision to share information should never be made as an individual, but with the backup of the leadership team. 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 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.

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Procedures

Our procedure is based on the seven golden rules for information sharing as set out in Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act and GDPR (2018) is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
 - Our policy and procedures on Information Sharing and GDPR Privacy Statement provide guidance to appropriate sharing of information with external agencies.
2. Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could, be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or appropriate to do so.

At Highfield we ensure parents:

- Receive information about our Privacy Statement when starting their child and that they sign our Registration Form to say that they understand the circumstances in which information may be shared without their consent. This will only be when it is a matter of safeguarding a child or vulnerable adult;
 - Have information about our Safeguarding Children and our Child Protection Policy; and
 - Have information about other circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with regard to any SEND the child may have or transition to school.
3. Seek advice if we are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
 - Leaders contact children's social care for advice where they have doubts or are unsure.
 4. Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. We may still share information without consent if, in our judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. We will base our judgement on the facts of the case.
 - Guidelines for consent are part of this procedure.
 5. Consider safety and wellbeing: base our information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.

At Highfield we:

- Record concerns and discuss these with DSL (Ruth Coleman) or alternates (Jannice Simpson, Jayde Scripps or Denise Lewis)
 - Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and with whom; and
 - Follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure. We will ensure that the information we share is necessary for the purpose for which we are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
 - Our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.
 7. Keep a record of our decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If we decide to share, then record what we have shared and with whom and for what purpose.

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- Where information is shared, the reasons for doing so are recorded in the child's file; where it is decided that information is not to be shared that is recorded too.

Consent

Parents have the right to be informed that their consent to share information will 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.
- We may cover this verbally at the home visit and in the induction pack.
- Parents sign our Health and Welfare form to agree to this.
- Parents are asked to give written consent (on the Health and Welfare form) to share information about additional needs their child may have, or to pass on Learning Journeys to the next school.
- We consider the following questions when we need to share:
 - Is there a legitimate purpose to sharing information?
 - Does the information enable the person to be identified?
 - Is the information confidential?
 - If so, do we have consent to share?
 - Is there a statutory duty or court order requiring us to share the information?
 - If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest for us to share information?
 - If the decision is to share, are we sharing the right information in the right way?
 - Have we properly recorded our decision?

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of Highfield Nursery School, which is to the safety and wellbeing of the child.

Please also see:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Privacy Statement

Legal Framework

- Data Protection Act (2018)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2018)
- Human Rights Act (1998)