



INFORMATION SHARING

EYFS: 3.68 – 3.71

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 decision should never be made as an individual, but with the back-up of the Family support worker and headteacher. 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.

Our procedure is based on the *6 points for Good Practice* as set out in *Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide (HMG 2006)*

1. Explain to families how, when and why information will be shared about them and with whom.

That consent is normally obtained, unless it puts the child at risk or undermines a criminal investigation

- We ensure parents receive information about our information sharing policy when starting their child in the centre 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.
- We ensure parents have information about our Child Protection policy.
- We ensure parents 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.

2. Consider the safety and welfare of the child when making a decision about sharing information – if there are concerns regarding 'significant harm' the child's wellbeing and safety is paramount. We record concerns and discuss these with the Family Support Worker and/or Head teacher and record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom. We follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.

3. Respect the wishes of children and parents not to consent to share confidential information. However, in the interests of the child, we are able to judge when it is reasonable to override their wish. Guidelines for consent are part of this procedure. Managers are conversant with this and are able to advise staff accordingly.

4. Seek advice when there are doubts about possible significant harm to a child or others. Managers contact children's social care for advice where they have doubts or are unsure.