

# Naunton Park Pre-School Playgroup



## Confidentiality Policy

### Statement of intent

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 within the playgroup.

### Aim

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.

### Methods

We keep two kinds of records on children attending the playgroup.

#### 1. Developmental records

- These include observations of the children whilst they are attending the playgroup, samples of their work, photographs of them playing and summaries of their development and records of achievements.
- They are kept in a lockable filing cabinet and can be accessed and contributed to by staff. They are shared with parents at the end of the school year, but parents can see them at anytime, if they wish to do so.

#### 2. Personal records

These include:

- Registration and admission forms and signed consents. These are kept in a file in the lockable filing cabinet.
- 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 are kept in individual, confidential files in the lockable filing cabinet.
- Parents have access, in accordance with the access to records procedure, to the files and records of their own child(ren) 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 a key person.

## **Information Sharing**

- There are times when we are required to share information about a child or their family. These are when:
  - there are concerns a child is or may be suffering significant harm
  - the 'reasonable cause to believe' a child is or may be suffering significant harm is not clear
  - there are concerns about 'serious harm to adults' (such as domestic violence or other matters affecting the welfare of the parents)
- We explain to families about our duty to share information for the above reasons.
- Where we have concerns as above, we would normally gain consent from families to share. This does not have to be in writing, but we will record in the child's file that we have gained verbal consent as a result of discussing a concern that we need to refer to a social care agency.
- We do not seek consent from parents to share information where we believe that a child, or sometimes a vulnerable adult, may be endangered by seeking to gain consent. For example where we have cause to believe a parent may try to cover up abuse or threaten a child.
- Where we take a decision to share information without consent, this is recorded in the child's file and the reason clearly stated.
- Where evidence to support our concerns are not clear we may seek advice from our local safeguarding childcare service.
- We only share relevant information that is accurate, factual, non-judgmental and up to date.

## **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.
- Students attending the playgroup are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

## **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 playgroup supervisor.
- The supervisor informs the chair of the committee and sends a written acknowledgment.
- The playgroup commits to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.
- The supervisor and the key person 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 the letters will be 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 safeguarding children service, 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 these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
- The playgroup supervisor and key person 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 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 invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through with the supervisor, so 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. At this point the Chairperson needs to be informed and would have access to the file.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the playgroup, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please see our child protection policy.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Naunton Park Pre-School Playgroup

Held on .....

Signed on behalf of the playgroup.....

Office.....

To be reviewed	Reviewed by	Office	Signature	Date