

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Purpose:

To provide clarity to parents, carers, employees and outside agencies about the essential levels of confidentiality that is required within Bolnore Village Pre-School.

To provide a transparent and explicit confidentiality policy that ensures a high level of practice within Bolnore Village Pre-School.

Application:

This policy applies to everyone who works or visits the Pre-School, whether they are visitors, employees or volunteers.

Introduction:

To maintain the confidence and trust of everyone using the Pre-School, we expect all members of staff, including bank staff, volunteers and students to act in a professional manner and observe the highest level of integrity at all times. Matters of a confidential and sensitive nature are only discussed within the setting or outside on a need to know basis with only relevant people, at appropriate times and in the correct settings.

Safeguarding children and families: (please see separate policy on safeguarding for comprehensive information)

Bolnore Village Pre-School is committed to ensuring that the needs of the young children in our care are kept safe and receive the appropriate support they need and when they need it.

To be effective in our work, and to safeguard children and their families from suffering harm, abuse or neglect, we acknowledge there will be times when information will need to be shared within the Pre-School and other agencies. We recognise that it is by sharing information with other agencies that we can intervene and children and their families get access to the services they need. This information may include matters which are sensitive and confidential e.g. child protection, family support, special education needs and Early Help.

When sharing information, seeking consent, preferably in writing will always be our first option. However, we acknowledge that in exceptional circumstances when this will not be possible such as:-

- Where consent cannot be obtained or is refused and the child is at risk of harm.
- Where it may undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime.
- To protect children or other people from harm, to promote the welfare of children or to prevent a crime and disorder.

A decision whether to share information without consent is only taken following consideration of the needs, safety and welfare of a child. This decision is taken by the Managers following consultation with only relevant professionals. If there is any doubt further advice and support is sought. We always ensure that the information we share is accurate, evidence based, up-to-date and secure and that we are clear why, what and who will have access to some or all the information. All information is collated, documented and minutes of meetings recorded. Decisions to share or not to share information are recorded in writing.

Storage and copying of information and children's data:

The storage of all information held at the Pre-School complies with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Confidential files, information and data should not be removed from the site without permission of the Manager and only for specific agreed purposes.

They should be kept securely at all times and returned to the files as soon as possible. Documents containing confidential information are stored in relevant files and secured in an appropriate place. Additional copies of confidential information (other than those held by those that they relate to) are collected and shredded immediately following meetings by the person who has convened the meeting.

Copying of confidential information is only made by those with authorisation and care is always taken to ensure copies are collected from printers immediately and not left in public places where they can be read. This also applies to the receiving or sending of faxes by checking fax numbers, phoning beforehand and ensuring it has arrived at the right place. Consideration is taken on the location of printers, fax machines and copiers.

Bolnore Village Pre-School is registered with the **Information Commission Office**

Please see separate Privacy Notice

Working in partnership:

Working with other agencies is an integral part of good Pre-School practice and may involve telephone conversations with families and other professionals. When this is necessary care is taken to ensure conversations are private and cannot be overheard.

Employee's information and data:

Confidential information and documents relating to employees e.g. clinical supervision, performance management, personal information, complaints, grievances and competency is held securely and only accessed in accordance with the agreed policies of the Pre-School.

Employees confidential files are securely locked and accessible only to the Managers. Individuals employed by the Pre-School are able to access their own files.

Data kept electronically is password protected and accessible only to authorised personnel.

All staff can normally expect that their personal details and health records will remain confidential unless:

- Endangers others
- There is a legal obligation to disclose such information
- Despite the duty of confidentiality, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

Levels of disclosure:

The key factor in deciding whether or not to disclose confidential information is proportionality i.e. the amount of confidential information disclosed and the number of people to whom it should be disclosed should be no more than necessary to meet the public interest in protecting the health and wellbeing of the child.

Training:

We are committed to providing appropriate training, support and guidance on confidentiality and record keeping for employees, in order that they can carry out their respective duties, confidently and effectively. Confidentiality will be the key aspect for the induction of new staff.

Sharing of practice:

For the purpose of training the sharing of case studies is only with the full written consent from the subject of the study. Any references to the family and settings are removed and a copy of all the information shared provided, to enable any omissions to be agreed.

Prior to the sharing of case studies the lead practitioner has the responsibility to remind participants of the need to declare interest if during the process it becomes clear the subject of the study is known to them. A decision will then be made as to whether it is appropriate for the participant to continue attending whilst the case is being shared and discussed.

Staff undertaking babysitting duties for Pre-School families:

Occasionally a parent/carer may request the services of a member of staff for 'babysitting' outside of the setting, in light of the fact that staff are trained, DBS checked and that their child/children know the member of staff. This is an undertaking between the member of staff and the family involved, but it is necessary for the member of staff to let the Managers know of the arrangement, and care should be taken at all times to adhere to this confidentiality policy. The role and responsibilities of an employee of the Pre-School must come first and therefore the Managers should be informed if a member of staff feels that their ability to perform their job within the setting is compromised or adversely affected in any way.

Equality and inclusion:

This policy is written in the light of our commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion.

Other relevant policies

- Complaints policy
- Safeguarding children policy
- Health and safety policy
- Privacy Notice