



Bowes Pre-School & Holiday Club

10.10 Information sharing

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Bowes Pre-school 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 need to understand their organisation's position and commitment to information sharing. They need to have confidence in the continued support of their organisation where they have used their professional judgment and shared information professionally'.

Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government 2015)

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 record and share information about children and their families (data subjects) in line with the six principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018) which are further explained in our Privacy Notice that is given to parents at the point of enrolment. The six principles state that personal data must be:-

- Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes.
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed.
- Accurate and where necessary, kept up to date.
- Kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is processed.
- Processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

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 than 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 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.

Procedures

Our procedure is based on the GDPR principles as listed above and the seven golden rules for sharing information as set out in Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. We also follow the guidance on information sharing from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Human Rights law are not barriers to information sharing as per the Children Act 1989 but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
 - Our policy and procedures on Information sharing 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 consent, unless it is unsafe or if we have a legal obligation to do so. A Privacy Notice is given to parents at the point of enrolment to explain this further.

In our setting we ensure parents:

- Receive a copy of our Privacy Notice and information about our Information Sharing Policy when starting their child in our setting 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;
 - Have information about our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy; and
 - Have information about the other 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.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners if in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
 - Managers 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, the lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. We will need to base our judgement on the facts of the case. When sharing or requesting personal information from someone, we will need to be certain of the basis upon which we do so. Where we have consent, we must be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
 - We base decisions to share information without consent on judgments about the facts of the case and whether there is a legal obligation.
 - Guidelines for consent are part of this procedure.
 - Our Manager is conversant with this and is able to advise staff accordingly.
 5. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.

In our setting we:

- Record concerns and discuss these with our designated person and/or designated officer of the committee for child protection matters;
- Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom;

- and
 - Follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you 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 and Children's Records 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 your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.
- 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 a right to be informed that their consent to share information will be sought in most cases, as well as the kinds of circumstances when their consent may not 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 when the child starts or include this in our prospectus.
- Parents sign our Registration Form at registration to say they understand this.
- Parents are asked to give written consent to share information about any additional needs their child may have, or to pass on child development summaries to the next provider/school.
- Copies can be given to parents of the forms they sign
- We consider the following questions when we need to share:
 - Is there legitimate purpose to sharing the information?
 - Does the information enable the person to be identified?
 - Is the information confidential?
 - If the information is confidential, 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?
- Consent must be freely given and informed – that is the person giving consent needs to understand why information will be shared, what will be shared, who will see information, the purpose of sharing it and the implications for them of sharing that information as detailed in the Privacy Notice.
- Consent must be explicit, verbally but preferably in writing, or implicit if the context is such that sharing information is an intrinsic part of our service or it has been explained and agreed at the outset.
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
- We explain our Information Sharing Policy to our parents.

Separated parents

- Consent to share need only be sought from one parent. Where parents are separated, this would normally be the parent with whom the child resides. Where there is a dispute, we will consider this carefully.

- Where the child is looked after, we may also need to consult with the Local Authority, as 'corporate parent' before information is shared.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of Bowes Pre-school, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please also see our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

Legal Framework

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

Further guidance

- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HMG 2015)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (HMG 2015)
- Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HMG 2015)

This policy is fully supported by the Manager, Staff, Committee and parents/carers of Bowes Pre-School.

Signed:- (Chairperson)

Print Name: Date:

Signed:- (Manager)

Print Name: Date:

Review date: