

**Under Fives Roundabout
Confidentiality Policy
Policy No: 1.4.**

Last reviewed: August 2009

To be reviewed by: August 2010

Responsible member of staff: Ludmila Stanley

Responsible member of committee:

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
1.3. Keeping safe	2.1. Respecting each other 2.2. Parents as partners	3.4. The wider context	

Confidentiality policy

Statement of intent

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers, while ensuring that they have access to high quality early years care and education in our Pre-School/Playgroup.

Aim

We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information with our staff in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children.

Methods

To ensure that all those using and working in the Pre-School/Playgroup can do so with confidence, we respect confidentiality in the following ways.

1. Parents have ready access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.
2. 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 the key person.
3. Any concerns a keyperson may have about a child's behaviour or development will be discussed where possible in private with the parent. If appropriate, this will be after discussion with another more senior member of staff (for example, the group leader or SENCO).
4. Any concerns/evidence relating to a child's personal safety are kept in a secure, confidential file and are shared with as few people as possible on a "need-to-know" basis.
5. Personal information about children, families and staff is kept securely in a lockable file whilst remaining as accessible as possible. These include registration and admission forms, signed consents, and 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
6. Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
7. Students on recognised qualifications and training, when they are observing in the Pre-School/Playgroup, are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.
8. We adhere to data protection rules and will not pass on information or details without explicit permission, preferably written, without good cause (see also our child protection policy)

Staff, volunteers, committee members, helpers and parents/carers are expected to sign and adhere to a statement of confidentiality, as attached.

Access to personal records

Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family following the procedure below.

1. Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the Pre-School/Playgroup leader.
2. The Pre-School/Playgroup leader informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
3. We commit to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.
4. The Pre-School/Playgroup leader and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
5. 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 these letters are retained on the file.
6. 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
7. It also includes workers from any other agency, including the social care team, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
8. When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
9. A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
10. The Pre-School/Playgroup leader and chairperson of the management committee 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.
11. What remains is the information recorded by the Pre-School/Playgroup, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.
12. The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the Pre-School/Playgroup leader, so that it can be explained.
13. 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.

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

Revised August 2009