



Early Education & Childcare Confidentiality and Data Policy

Aims:

- To ensure everyone is aware of the procedure for dealing with and storing confidential information.
- To ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and The Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- To communicate expectations for a professional and non-judgemental approach to discussing sensitive and personal information.

Procedures

Confidential Information

The Early Years Foundation Stage and Childcare Register require providers to keep a range of confidential information relating to the families who use the service. This includes, but is not limited to; personal details such as dates of birth, medical details and contact details.

BS3 Community Development stores these details in paper format in a locked filing cabinet and in electronic format through password protected computer software. Access to these details is controlled by the Early Education & Childcare management team who, unless they receive specific consent from an individual or are acting under advice relating to safeguarding children will not release these outside of the organisation. Access to this information is limited exclusively to professional use. Hard copies of confidential information will remain on the premises at all times.

BS3 Community Development uses some cloud based systems and management software which are managed by third party 'Data Processors'. As part of these arrangements BS3 Community Development retains its responsibility as the 'Data Controller' and as such selects only providers with the expected levels of encryption and security, and satisfactory agreements regarding data protection. All software and IT systems are password protected.

Freedom of Information

The parent or legal guardian of any child who is registered for Early Education & Childcare services has the right to access information held about their child.

A Professional Approach

Practitioners will discuss information relating to individual children to ensure the experiences they provide are relevant and meet specific needs. Families who use the organisation should expect this information to be treated in a non-judgemental and anti-discriminatory way.

The Early Education & Childcare staff team agree that:

- 1) Any information discussed will be professionally relevant.
- 2) Any information will be discussed in a professional and objective manner.
- 3) Sensitive information will be discussed in a private environment.
- 4) Information about individual children or families will not be shared in front of other children.
- 5) Practitioners will avoid allowing personal opinions to affect their judgements and should refer to Senior or Lead Practitioners, Centre Policy or National Guidance as appropriate.

Electronic Communication

No professional information or information relating to individual families or children will be shared via text message, social networking websites or personal email or any other format of electronic communication by any member of the Early Education & Childcare staff team. This will include communication between colleagues due to the potential risks of this information being viewed by people outside of the organisation.

Supervision of Students and New Staff

This policy will form part of the induction of students and new members of staff. All students will be supervised closely by an established practitioner. New members of staff will work alongside a 'buddy' during their initial induction.

Photographs of Children

With reference to the Information Commissioner's Office Guidance for Education Settings, BS3 Community Development permits parents to take photographs of their child during events (e.g. Christmas Carol Singing) on the understanding that these are for personal use only and are therefore exempt from the Data Protection Act. Parents are requested not to share these images online (e.g. via social networking sites) as this is considered to be outside of the understanding purely personal use.

Where parents have any concerns or objections to their child appearing in photographs, they should discuss this with a member of staff in advance of any event. In response to this consideration will be given as to how to manage specific occasions and the

organisation reserves the right to withdraw the above permission (particularly where there may be concern about a child's safety).

Photographs which are taken by BS3 Community Development for educational purposes (e.g. to form part of children's assessment file) are covered by the parental consent information included in the registration forms. Where photographs are intended to be shared with a wider audience (e.g. on our website, or in a local newspaper), specific consent will be requested from a parent/guardian prior to the photograph being used.

Reviewed October 2020

Related Documentation

- ICO Guidance regarding photographs in education settings:
http://www.ico.org.uk/upload/documents/library/data_protection/practical_application/taking_photos.pdf
- 5. Child Protection Policy