



Information Sharing and Confidentiality Policy

Parents/carers, children and young people have the right to know that their information is kept securely and in what circumstances it can be shared. Staff and volunteers need to understand what their role is in information sharing. The effective sharing of information between organisations and agencies is essential to keep children safe.

Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

According to Data Protection principles, records containing personal information should be:

- adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose(s) for which they are held
- accurate and up to date
- only kept for as long as is necessary (Information Commissioner's Office, 2021).

Data protection law is not a barrier to sharing information when it is necessary, proportionate, and justified to do so. The most important consideration is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.

The Data Protection Act 2018 allows all organisations to process data for safeguarding purposes lawfully and without consent where necessary for the purposes of:

- protecting an individual from neglect or physical and emotional harm; or
- protecting the physical, mental or emotional wellbeing of an individual.

This covers situations where a child may be at risk of significant harm due to neglect or abuse and applies to referrals made to the local authority for any child considered to be a 'child in need'.

Circumstances when we will share information

All personal information will be treated as confidential. However confidential information may be shared to other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

In some circumstances, seeking consent from a person we believe is neglecting or abusing a child may undermine safeguarding procedures and may increase the risk of harm to the child or another person. In these situations, we will share this information without consent.

If a child makes a disclosure, we will never promise the child confidentiality, instead we will explain that the information will need to be passed on to the appropriate person to help keep them safe.

Our organisation is responsible for lawfully sharing the information we hold, and we must not assume that someone else will pass on information that may be critical to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.

Principles of information sharing



Our organisation will adhere to the following principles of information sharing:

- Information sharing must be necessary and proportionate to the circumstances of the child or young person.
- The information must be shared quickly and securely.
- Use clear and precise language.
- Identify how the information is to be shared.
- Record exactly what has been shared.
- If information is withheld, then that should also be recorded.

When sharing information with any organisation, we will first consider the principles outlined by Government Guidance. We will consult the 7 golden rules for information sharing from 'Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners'.

All staff are responsible for sharing information with the DSP where necessary. The DSP (Ellie Brown) is responsible for sharing information internally and externally outside of this organisation. This would be done confidentially and on a 'need to know' basis. Passwords and encryption will be used if sharing electronic files.

Storage of information records

Beside Youth C.I.C. will store the following records on children/families:

- Registration forms
- Consent forms
- Safeguarding concerns

Registration and consent form information will be accessible by those in the organisation who work on the projects they relate to, to ensure that the young people are appropriately safeguarded. Safeguarding concerns are accessed only by the DSP and shared on a 'need to know' basis.

Initial safeguarding concerns are recorded on the 'Reporting a safeguarding concern' Microsoft Form (which has the appropriate encryption). Further records of the concern and any further actions will be stored in individual files in a folder on the organisation's secure cloud. Each file will be password-protected, and only the DSP will be able to access them. They will only be shared with others on a 'need to know' basis. Child protection files will be held until the child is 25 years old, after which they will be deleted.

Retention process

Personal data retention is governed by current Data Protection legislation. Data must be kept accurate, up to date and retained for no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which they were obtained.

Where a person has requested that we delete all data we hold about them, we may need to retain basic personal data to evidence that we have completed the request.

Beside Youth C.I.C. needs to communicate with these data subjects to clearly sign post them to their ability to withdraw their consent or challenge the legitimate interest that has been assessed, this is commonly known as 'opt out'. Where appropriate the data subject should be informed every 2 years

of the consent or legitimate interest being used to process their data with an option to update this preference.

Recording concerns about adult behaviour

Sometimes concerns might be raised about an adult who works or volunteers with children. This could be because they've:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved in a way that indicated they are unsuitable to work with young people.

We will keep clear and comprehensive records of all allegations made against adults working or volunteering with children.

Records relating to concerns about an adult's behaviour will be kept in the person's confidential personnel file and a copy will be given to the individual.

Retention process

These documents will be retained for at least until they reach their normal retirement age or for 10 years – whichever is longer. (IRMS, 2019; Department for Education, 2022). This applies to volunteers and paid staff.

If the allegations were unfounded, they will be kept for the same amount of time. If the allegations are malicious, they will be destroyed immediately.

Exceptions

There are some situations where records need a longer retention period. For example, if:

- the records provide information about a child's personal history, which they might want to access at a later date
- the records have been maintained for the purposes of research
- the information in the records is relevant to legal action that has been started but not finished
- the records have been archived for historical purposes (for example if the records are relevant to legal proceedings involving the organisation).

Policy Review

Name: Ellie Brown

Signed: 

Date: 04/06/26



This policy will be reviewed on 04/06/27

This policy will be reviewed by Ellie Brown.