Beetley and District Preschool

Registered Charity: 1181636

Ethical Information Sharing

Policy Statement

At Beetley & District Preschool, we recognise that appropriate information sharing is essential to safeguarding children, promoting their wellbeing and supporting positive outcomes. Effective information sharing helps ensure that children and families receive the right support at the right time and enables practitioners to work together in the child's best interests.

We are committed to sharing information responsibly, lawfully and ethically, always balancing the child's welfare with the rights of children and families to privacy and confidentiality. Information will only be shared where there is a clear and legitimate reason for doing so and in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

Aims

We aim to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of every child
- ensure information is shared appropriately, lawfully and proportionately
- work openly and honestly with parents and carers wherever possible;
- support effective partnership working with other professionals and agencies
- ensure decisions regarding information sharing are made in the best interests of the child
- maintain accurate records of information shared and the reasons for sharing
- ensure all staff understand their responsibilities regarding ethical information sharing.

Principles of Ethical Information Sharing

Information shared with the preschool by children, families and other professionals is treated with respect and handled sensitively.

We recognise that information sharing is an essential part of safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Sharing information appropriately

enables practitioners to provide coordinated support, identify concerns at an early stage and work collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

When making decisions about sharing information, the welfare and best interests of the child will always be our primary consideration.

Information will only be shared when it is:

- necessary
- relevant
- accurate
- proportionate
- shared with appropriate people
- recorded appropriately.

Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

We believe that open and honest communication with parents and carers supports positive relationships and helps build trust.

Wherever possible, we will discuss concerns with parents and carers and seek their knowledge, views and consent before sharing information with other professionals or agencies.

We recognise that parents and carers know their child best, and their views are valued when decisions are being made regarding their child's care, learning, development and wellbeing.

However, there may be occasions where seeking consent would place a child or another person at increased risk of harm or would prejudice a police investigation. In these circumstances, information may be shared without consent in accordance with safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance.

Further information regarding partnership working with families can be found in the Parental Involvement policy.

When Information May Be Shared

Information is only shared when it is necessary, appropriate and in the best interests of the child.

This may be to safeguard a child, support their learning, development or wellbeing, enable appropriate support for children with SEND or medical

needs, facilitate smooth transitions, work effectively with other professionals or meet a legal or statutory requirement.

Where information is shared, it will only be shared with those who have a genuine need to know, such as parents and carers, schools, health professionals, Children's Services, the Police or other agencies involved in supporting the child or family.

Further information regarding partnership working with other professionals can be found in the Working in Partnership with Other Agencies policy.

Sharing Information Without Consent

There are occasions when confidential information must be shared without parental consent.

This may occur where:

- there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm;
- sharing information is necessary to safeguard a child or another vulnerable person;
- there is a legal obligation to share information; or
- not sharing the information would place a child or another person at greater risk of harm.

A decision to share information without consent is never taken lightly.

Wherever possible, decisions will be discussed with the Preschool Manager, Deputy Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another appropriate senior member of staff before information is shared. Where immediate action is required to safeguard a child, staff will act promptly in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

Recording Information Sharing Decisions

Whenever information is shared, an appropriate record will be maintained. Where appropriate, records will include:

- the information shared;
- the reason for sharing;
- who the information was shared with;
- whether parental consent was obtained, or the reason why consent was not sought;
- the date of the decision; and

- the name of the person making or authorising the decision.

Information sharing decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and only relevant information will be shared.

Professional Responsibilities

All staff, students and volunteers are expected to understand and follow this policy.

Information about children and families must never be shared casually or discussed outside legitimate professional purposes.

Staff are encouraged to seek advice whenever they are unsure whether information should be shared. Decisions will be supported by the Preschool Manager, Deputy Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead or other appropriate senior staff where required.

The Preschool recognises that information sharing sometimes requires careful professional judgement. Staff will be supported to make informed decisions in accordance with legislation, statutory guidance, this policy and the child's best interests.

Staff receive appropriate induction, information and ongoing training to help ensure they understand their responsibilities regarding confidentiality, safeguarding and ethical information sharing.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Working in Partnership with Other Agencies Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Supporting Children with SEND Policy
- Transitions Policy
- Parental Involvement Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance or preschool practice make this necessary.

- **Policy reviewed on:** 20th June 2026
- **Next review due:** 20th June 2027
- **Reviewed by:** Hollie Durrant and Julie East

Date:	Review Date:
Signed:	Signed:
Print Name: (Chairperson)	Print Name: (Manager)