

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers 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.

10.3 Children's records

Policy statement

We have record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements; the means we use to store and share that information takes place within the framework of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

This policy and procedure should be read alongside our Privacy Notice, Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy and our Information Sharing Policy.

Procedures

If a child attends another setting, we establish a regular two-way flow of appropriate information with parents and other providers. Where appropriate, we will incorporate comments from other providers, as well as parents and/or carers into the child's records.

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

Developmental records

- These include observations of children in the setting, photographs, video clips and samples of their work and summary developmental reports.
- These are usually kept in locked filing cabinets and can be accessed, and contributed to, by pre-school staff, the child and the child's parents.
- In addition, some records are stored electronically in password protected files and/or programmes.

Personal records

These may include the following (as applicable):

- Personal details – including the child's registration form and any consent forms.

- Contractual matters – including a copy of the signed parent contract and declaration forms, the child’s days and times of attendance, a record of the child’s fees and funding, any fee reminders or records of disputes about fees.
- Child’s development, health and well-being – including a summary only of the child’s EYFS profile report, a record of discussions about every day matters about the child’s development health and well-being with the parent.
- Early Support – including any additional focussed intervention provided by the setting (e.g. support for behaviour, language or development that needs an SEN action plan) and records of any meetings held.
- Welfare and child protection concerns – including records of all welfare and protection concerns, and our resulting action, meetings and telephone conversations about the child, an Education, Health and Care Plan and any information regarding a Looked After Child.
- Correspondence and Reports – including a copy of the child’s 2 Year Old Progress Check (as applicable), all letters and emails to and from other agencies and any confidential reports from other agencies.
- These confidential records are stored in a lockable filing cabinet, which is always locked when not in use.
- We read any correspondence in relation to a child, note any actions and file it immediately
- We ensure that access to children’s files is restricted to those authorised to see them and make entries in them, this being pre-school staff.
- We may be required to hand children’s personal files to Ofsted as part of an inspection or investigation process; or to local authority staff conducting a S11 audit, as long as authorisation is seen. We ensure that children’s personal files are not handed over to anyone else to look at.
- Parents have access, in accordance with our Privacy Notice, Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy, to the files and records of their own children, but do not have access to information about any other child.
- The pre-school staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Our staff induction programme includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.
- We retain children’s records for three years after they have left the setting; except records that relate to an accident or child protection matter, which are kept until a child reaches the age of 21 years or 24 years respectively. These are kept in a secure place.

Archiving children’s files

- When a child leaves our setting, we remove all paper documents from the child’s personal file and place them in a folder labelled with the date they left. This is placed in an archive box, stored in a locked cabinet for three years. Documents are securely destroyed when we reach the end of the legal retention period for them.
- If data is kept electronically it is encrypted and stored as above.
- Where there were s.47 child protection investigations, we mark the envelope with a star and archive it for 25 years.
- We store financial information according to our finance procedures.

Other records

- We keep a daily record of the names of the children we are caring for, their hours of attendance and the names of their key person.
- Students on placement in the setting, are advised of our Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy and are required to respect it.

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 (2015)