



Information Sharing: Guidance for all staff

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The school recognizes that it is vital that all stakeholders in the school are confident that their personal information is kept safe and confidential, maintaining the privacy of the individual
- 1.2 The school works in partnership with a range of external agencies and the sharing of information is very important to achieving positive outcomes for the child.

Information sharing can be particularly important to:

- Deliver more effective early intervention to prevent problems escalating for a child and their family, increasing the chance of achieving positive outcomes.
- Ensure a child receives the support that they require through and after significant transitions in their lives e.g. moving onto secondary school
- Prevent significant harm happening to a child, when it is necessary to share your concerns about a child with social care or the police.

Information sharing may also be required when there is a statutory duty or court order to provide information to another party.

2. Guidance on Information Sharing

2.1 If you are asked, or wish, to share information, you must use your professional judgement to decide whether to share or not and what information it is appropriate to share.

2.2 There are key questions to inform your decision-making about information sharing:

- Is there a clear and legitimate purpose for you to share the information?
- Is the information confidential?
- If the information is confidential, do you have consent to share?
- If the consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent to share confidential information, is there sufficient reason to share the information.
- If the decision is to share, are you sharing information appropriately and securely?
- Have you properly recorded your information sharing decision?

Further guidance and information on each of these questions can be found in the HM Government publication Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (ref: DCSF-00807-2008). This publication can be downloaded at: teachernet.gov.uk/publications

Information Sharing

2.3 When sharing information with another party, always remember to:

- Be open and honest with the parent/carer from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will be shared and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so
- Seek advice if you are in any doubt. All decisions to share information should be authorized by either the head teacher or the SENCO, who are both trained as designated staff for child protection.
- Share with consent unless this can be overridden because the child is at risk of serious harm. Except in cases of child protection, the parent's wishes must be respected if they do not give consent.
- Always ensure your decision is based on the child's safety and well-being at all times.
- Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion and is shared securely.
- Keep a record of your decision

3 Communication with Parents

The school's policy for information sharing is available to parents through the school's web-site. There is a statement about information sharing and the school's procedures in the school's prospectus, which is available for all new parents.