

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Jack and Jill Playgroup will respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers. We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in confidence and that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children.

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

### 1. **Developmental records**

- These include observations of children in the setting, samples of their work, photographs, summary developmental reports and records of achievement.
- They are usually kept in the playroom and can be accessed, and contributed to, by staff, the child and the child's parents.

### 2. **Personal records**

- These include registration and admission forms, signed consents, and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matters involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters that are sensitive.
- These confidential records are stored in a lockable cabinet and kept secure by the person in charge in the office filing cabinet. Keys are kept by Delia Bryan Administrator/Manager, Sally Howarth Supervisor/Manager.
- Parents have access, in accordance with the access to record procedures, to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs and safeguarding issues. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality.
- Information shared between parents in a discussion or training group is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not discussed outside of it.

### **Other records**

- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.

- Students when they are observing in the setting are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it. Part of their induction process is an awareness of our confidentiality policy and the importance of sharing information outside the setting regarding children, families and which includes use of social media, mobile telephones etc.

### **Access to personal records**

Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family following the procedure below.

- Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the supervisor or administrator.
- The supervisor informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
- The setting commits to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.
- The supervisor or administrator (managers) and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. Copies of these letters are retained on the file.
- 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
- It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
- When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
- The supervisor or administrator (managers) and chairperson of the management committee go through the file and remove any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file.
- What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.
- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the supervisor or administrator, so that it can be explained.

- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency.

Please see also our policies on child protection, health and safety and safeguarding.

#### Legal framework

- Data protection Act (1988)
- Human Rights Act (1998)

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Jack and Jill Playgroup held on:**

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**Signed on behalf of the pre-school:**

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**CHAIRPERSON**

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records
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