

24- Information sharing policy

Aim:

- To ensure that parents have a right to know that the information they share with us will be confidential
- To inform parents and carers that some circumstances make it necessary for us to share information to the relevant authorities.

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation when:

- It is to prevent a crime from being committed,
- To intervene to prevent harm to a child or adult.
- Not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- Share where there is a risk of harm

This decision is made jointly by the management team.

Procedures

Our procedure is based on the seven golden rules for information sharing as set out in Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66320b06c084007696fca731/Info_sharing_advice_content_May_2024.pdf

The Seven golden rules for sharing information (including personal information):

1. All children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect. Protecting a child from such harm takes priority over protecting their privacy, or the privacy rights of the person(s) failing to protect them. Any concerns are recorded on a Concern form and shared with the Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL)
2. When we have a safeguarding concern, we will wherever it is practicable and safe to do so, engage with the child and/or their carer(s), and explain who we intend to share information with, what information we will be sharing and why. We are not required to inform them, if we have reason to believe that doing so may put the child at increased risk of harm (e.g., because their carer(s) may harm the child, or react violently to anyone seeking to intervene, or because the child might withhold information or withdraw from services).
3. Woodentops does not need consent to share personal information about a child and/or members of their family if a child is at risk or there is a perceived risk of harm. We will ensure transparency about our decisions and seek to work cooperatively with a child and their carer(s) wherever possible.
4. Woodentops will seek advice promptly whenever we are uncertain (through the appropriate agencies) or do not fully understand how the legal framework supports information sharing in a particular case. If a child at risk of harm we will share information regardless of our concerns that we may be criticised for sharing information.
5. When sharing information, Woodentops takes steps to protect the identities of any individuals (e.g., the child, a carer, a neighbour, or a colleague) who might suffer harm if their details became known to an abuser or one of their associates.
6. Woodentops only shares relevant and accurate information with individuals or agencies/organisations that have a role in safeguarding the child and/or providing their family with support, and only share the information they need to support the provision of their services. The information shared is necessary, proportionate for the intended purpose, relevant, adequate and accurate.
7. Woodentops will record the reasons for our information sharing decision, irrespective of whether or not we decide to share information. When another practitioner or organisation requests information from Woodentops, we will explain the reasons why we will not share and be willing to reconsider if necessary.

At Woodentops, we ensure parents:

- Receive information about our Information Sharing and the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policies when their child starts at Woodentops via a website link and documents to read in the Family App.

- Read and sign the Registration Form to say that they understand the circumstances in which information may be shared without their consent. This will be when we are safeguarding the child.
- Know when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with the early Years Send Team or Health visiting team.

At Woodentops we:-

- Are aware of how to refer concerns to DSL and what to do.
- Are knowledgeable about listening to children when disclosing information and what to do next.
- Know how to record concerns and discuss these with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared
- Follow procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping as set out in our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure that the information we share is necessary for the purpose of sharing it, 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.
- Our Safeguarding Children Policy and Children's Records Policy set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.
- Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it. If you decide to share, record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.
- Where information is shared, we record the reasons for doing so in the child's file; where it is decided that information is not to be shared that is recorded too.

Consent

When parents choose Woodentops for their child, they will share information about themselves and their families. This information is regarded as confidential.

We inform them as follows:

- Parents know that we will gain their consent and that in specific circumstances their consent may not be needed to share information.
- Parents sign our Registration Form to confirm that they understand how and why we share information.
- We ask parents to give written consent to share information about any additional needs their child may have, or to pass on child development summaries to the next provider/school.
- We give parents copies of the forms they sign.
- Consent must be informed - that is the person giving consent needs to understand why information will be shared,
- We explain our Information Sharing Policy to parents.

Separated parents.

- Consent to share need only be sought from one parent. Where parents are separated, it would require parental representation.
- Where the child is looked after, we may also need to consult the Local Authority, as 'corporate parent' before information is shared. All the undertakings above are subject to our paramount commitment, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please also see our Safeguarding Children Policy.

This policy was adopted on	25 th March 2019
Policy reviewed	2 nd Dec 2024
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