



The Little Meadow Group

Information Sharing

Procedure

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Author	Sharon Phillips	March 2010	
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The Little Meadow Group

Information Sharing

Policy Statement.

The Little Meadow Group recognises that parents have a right to know that the information they share will be regarded as confidential as well as be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information

The setting understands it is obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from its source or the subject if it is in the public interest. This is when:

- It is to prevent a crime being committed or to intervene where one may have been or to prevent harm to a parent or child; or
- Not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

The decision to disclose information will never be the responsibility of just one person It must be made by an appropriate group of voluntary committee and staff. In order to make an effective decision the three criteria they will consider are:

- Is there significant evidence to suggest a child is suffering or at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- Is there reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- Would they be preventing significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults, including prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

EYFS key themes and commitments

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning And Development
1.2 Inclusive practice. 1.3 Keeping safe.	2.1 Respecting Each Other 2.2 Parents as Partners	3.4 The Wider Context	



Procedure

Our procedure is based on the 6 points for Good Practice as set out in the *Information sharing: Practitioners' Guide* (HMG 2006)

1. Explain to families how, when and why information will be shared about them and with whom. That consent is normally obtained, unless it puts the child at risk or undermines a criminal investigation.
 - We ensure parents have access to our information sharing policy when joining the Group and they sign the registration form to say that they understand circumstances when information may be shared without consent. This will only be when it is a matter of safeguarding a child or a vulnerable adult.
 - We ensure parents have access to our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.
 - We ensure parents have information about the circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies for example with regards to any special needs the child may have or transition to school.
2. Consider the safety and welfare of the child when making the decision about sharing information- if there are concerns regarding "significant harm" the child's safety and well being are paramount.
 - We record concerns and discuss these with the setting's designated person and/or designated member of the voluntary committee for child protection matters. Record decisions made and the reason why the information will be shared and with whom.
 - We follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.
3. The Little Meadow Group will respect the wishes of children and parents not to consent to share confidential information. However, in the interests of the child, we are able to judge when it may be necessary to override their wishes.
 - We have guidelines for consent as part of this procedure.
 - Managers and are familiar with this and are able to guide and support staff.
4. The Group will seek advice when there are doubts about possible significant harm to a child or others.
 - Managers will contact children's social care for advice when they have doubts or are unsure.
5. The Little Meadow Group will ensure information shared will be accurate and up to date. It will be necessary for purpose and shared securely only with those who need to know.
 - The Setting's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection procedure and record keeping procedures set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.



6. Reasons for decisions to share information or not are recorded.

- Provision for this is set out in our client access to records policy.

Consent

Parents have a right to be informed that the setting will obtain their consent to share information. However, parents also need to be aware that there are circumstances when their permission will not be sought and their refusal to give consent may be overridden.

- Our policies and procedures outline our responsibilities regarding gaining consent to share information and when it may not be sought or overridden.
- We may cover this verbally when the child starts but will include it in our prospectus.
- Parents sign a form at registration to say they understand this.
- Copies are made available to parents of the forms they sign.
- Parents are asked to give written consent to share information about any additional needs their child may have or to pass on child development records to their next setting/school.
- We consider the following questions
 - Is there a legitimate purpose to sharing the information/
 - Does the information enable the person to be identified?
 - Is the information confidential?
 - If the information is confidential, do we have consent to share?
 - Is there a statutory duty or court order to share information?
 - If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest to share the information?
 - If the decision is to share, are we going to be sharing the correct information in the right way/
 - Make sure we have correctly documented our decision.

All the above undertakings are subject to the paramount commitment of The Little Meadow Group which is to the safety and well being of the children in our care. Please also refer to our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy.