

## Confidentiality

### **Summary:**

- Records and storage
- Sharing information with parent/carers
- Sharing information with other professionals

Beechwood School maintain a regular two way flow of information with parents and between providers.

Beechwood School ensures that all staff are aware of the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality.

Confidential information is information of a private or sensitive nature that is:

- Not already lawfully in the public domain
- And has been provided in circumstances where the person giving the information could reasonable expect that it would not be shared with others.

### **Records and storage**

All written personal information is securely held so unauthorised persons do not have access to it. Ofsted may require to see records at any time.

A child's file is up to date at all times and available for inspection by the parent/carers.

Records must include: name, address, and date of birth of each child and the name, address and contact number of a parent/carers. Parents/carers must notify settings/childminders of any change of detail including who holds parental responsibility.

Staff information must be kept confidential.

### **Sharing information with a parent/carers**

Parents are allowed access to all written records about their children (except in exceptional cases where data protection laws stipulate it is against the best interests of the child to do so) and, where requested, comments from parents are incorporated into the children's records.

It is good practice for a parent/carers to sign and date when they have read the file. Parents/carers should have access to the file within 40 calendar days of a request.

Information is only be discussed on a 'need to know basis' and parent/carers should be told of this at an appropriate time in the conversation, if confidential issues have been raised.

No child or family is discussed with another parent/carers. Where an incident has taken place with two children, such as biting (in the absence of the parent/carers) the parent/carers does not need to be told which other child it involved. They need to be informed of the action taken and reassured it was dealt with adequately.

### **Sharing information with other professionals**

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The following principles are used when considering whether information can be shared:

- We will inform the parent/carer, and children about how information will be shared and their agreement to this. The exception to this is where this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.
- Where there is a concern that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be given the greater weight.
- We will seek advice when we are in doubt.
- We will ensure any information we share is accurate, up-to-date, and necessary for the purpose we are sharing it, shared only with the people that need to see it, and is shared securely.
- We always record the reasons for our decision – whether we share information or not.

Staff at Beechwood School ensure that all concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.

### **Useful Resources:**

- Data Protection Act 1998 – [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)
- Freedom of Information Act - [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)