

Confidentiality Policy - POL029

It is the intention of Action for Children and Happy Bananas Holiday Club to respect the privacy of the children and families who have access to our Children and family services, whilst they have access to high quality service provision within our Children and family services.

Aim

Happy Bananas aim to ensure that all parents/carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of themselves or their children.

Methods

The Children and family services hold two kinds of records on children and their families attending the Children and family service.

1. Personal Records

- These include registration forms, signed consents, medical information, addresses, behaviour/SEN information.
- All confidential records are stored safely. (See Information Sharing Policy)
- Parents have access to the records in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act in relation to records of their own child, but do not have access to information about any other child or family. This will be given upon request.
- Children and family service Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other staff members, except where it affects planning for the child's needs, or where there are concerns for the child's safety.

2. Database records

- Parents/carers of all children attending the Children and family service complete a registration form, at the bottom is an agreement that parents sign to permit the Children and family service to store information on the relevant Local Authority database. Attendance at all sessions in the Children and family service is recorded on paper registers and this information is transferred onto the database. Attendance records are kept for Health and Safety Purposes.

Maintaining Confidentiality

It is important that all sensitive information is properly respected at all times.

Storage –sensitive information should not be left unattended in areas with public access. Confidential Information should be files in a locked room when not in use. Restricted information should be kept in a secure location and only unlocked for authorised use. Such information should be held away from general information such as personal files.

Electronic Information – This is on our school database. Only Management should gain access to these folders.

Written Communication – if you send confidential information internally it should be in a closed file or envelope marked “confidential” and if possible delivered by hand. You should not record judgmental comments about a person. A telephone call is sometimes more appropriate. Professional judgments must be marked as such.

It is essential that confidential material is not left in machines it has been printed. All confidential documents should be disposed of by shredding, It is important that out of date documents are removed and shredded from files regularly as per Information and Data Processing Policy POL007.

Care should be taken when providing or receiving information by telephone. It is the Children and family service staff members duty to ensure that you are speaking to the appropriate person. If contacting clients by phone you should

check with the client that it is secure and agree procedures for leaving messages.

All confidential conversations should take place in privacy, where an agreed member of staff is available to witness if needed. Please discuss with management before any phone calls to parents.

Non English speaking/writing families

All translation and interpretation staff handling sensitive information must have been trained to maintain confidentiality. They are expected to follow published confidentiality arrangements and as far as possible should be of the gender/ethnicity requested by the family.

Lost information/Stolen information

A log will be kept of lost, stolen or unauthorised access to confidential documents.

Any theft should be reported to the police, emphasising the confidential nature of the documents.

Access to personal records

Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family following the procedure detailed 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 Children and Family Service management team.

Legislation and Guidance that informs this policy

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Local Government Act 2000
- Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- HM Treasury (2003) Every Child Matters (CM.5860) London, The Stationery Office
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007). The Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures (CM.7280). London: The Stationery Office

Linked Policies

Data Processing Policy - POL007

Information Sharing Policy - POL017

Safeguarding – POL019