



Confidentiality Policy

Statement of intent

At Playhouse Pre-School, we recognise that working with children and families involves receiving and holding personal and sometimes sensitive information.

We respect the privacy of children and their parents/carers and will handle personal information responsibly, securely and confidentially. We aim to ensure that parents/carers can share information with us in the confidence that it will be used appropriately to support their child's care, learning, development, health and wellbeing.

We recognise that confidentiality must be balanced with our responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Confidential information will therefore be shared where there is a lawful reason to do so, including where information needs to be shared to protect a child from harm.

The setting will manage personal information in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation and guidance.

Confidentiality principles

We will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

- Personal information about children and families will only be accessed by staff who need the information to carry out their role.
- Staff will not discuss individual children or families with people who do not have a legitimate need to know the information.
- Staff will take care when discussing children and families within the setting and will avoid conversations taking place where they may be overheard by other parents, visitors or unauthorised people.
- Information provided by parents/carers will be treated confidentially and used appropriately to support their child's care, learning, development, health and wellbeing.
- Information may be shared without parental consent where there is a safeguarding concern, a legal requirement to do so, or another lawful basis for sharing the information.
- Information may be shared with relevant professionals and other agencies where this is necessary to support a child's welfare, health, development, education or safety and there is a lawful basis for doing so.
- Staff information, including employment and personnel information, will be treated as confidential and only accessed by those with appropriate responsibilities.
- Confidential information relating to safeguarding concerns will be handled in accordance with the setting's Safeguarding Policy.
- Visitors, students, volunteers and other individuals working in the setting will be expected to respect confidentiality.
- Staff, students, volunteers and visitors must not share confidential information about children, families or staff on social media or through other personal communication channels.

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- Confidential information will not be removed from the setting unless this is necessary for the person's role and appropriate arrangements have been made to keep the information secure.

Confidentiality procedures

Recording information

We will only collect and record information that is necessary for the care, education, health, development and safeguarding of children and for the effective management of the setting.

Parents/carers will be informed about the types of information the setting collects and how it is used through our privacy information and relevant setting documentation.

We may need to record sensitive information relating to:

- a child's health or medical needs;
- accidents, injuries or incidents;
- safeguarding or child protection concerns;
- discussions with parents/carers about sensitive matters;
- individual support, additional needs or developmental concerns;
- information received from or shared with other professionals; and
- action taken by the setting in response to concerns or incidents.

Such information will be handled securely and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to access it.

Storage and security

Paper records containing confidential information will be stored securely when not in use. Electronic records will be stored using appropriate security measures and access will be restricted to authorised individuals.

Staff will take reasonable steps to prevent confidential information from being:

- seen by unauthorised people;
- lost or misplaced;
- discussed in inappropriate places;
- accessed without permission; or
- shared through inappropriate communication channels.

Any suspected loss, unauthorised access or inappropriate disclosure of personal or confidential information must be reported to the setting manager/owner as soon as possible so that appropriate action can be taken.

Sharing information

Confidentiality does not prevent information being shared where there is a legitimate reason to do so.

Information may be shared:

- with parents/carers where appropriate;

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- between members of staff who need the information to care for or safeguard a child;
- with other settings attended by the child where appropriate and where there is a lawful basis for sharing;
- with health professionals, social care, safeguarding partners or other relevant agencies where appropriate;
- where required by law or a court;
- where necessary to safeguard a child or another person; or
- where another lawful basis for sharing applies.

Where consent is required, the setting will seek consent before sharing information wherever possible. However, consent will not be sought where doing so could place a child or another person at increased risk of harm or where there is another lawful reason for sharing without consent.

Information will be shared proportionately and only to the extent necessary for the purpose.

Conversations with parents/carers

Parents/carers are encouraged to speak openly with their child's key person and other members of staff about information that may affect their child's care, learning, development, health or wellbeing.

Sensitive conversations will, where possible, take place in an appropriate private area. Staff will not discuss information about another child or family with a parent/carer. Where parents/carers have concerns about another child or family, staff will listen to the concern but will not disclose confidential information about the other child or family.

Children accessing their information

Children have rights in relation to their personal information. The setting will take account of a child's age, understanding and individual circumstances when responding to requests relating to their personal information.

Parents/carers or others with parental responsibility may request access to information held about their child, subject to applicable data-protection law and any restrictions that may apply.

Where a parent/carer wishes to make a formal request for access to personal information held by the setting, the request should be made to the setting owner or manager. The setting will respond in accordance with the requirements of data-protection legislation. Information relating to other people will not normally be disclosed where doing so would breach their privacy or other legal rights.

Where information is subject to legal restrictions or exemptions, the setting may need to withhold or redact some information.

Legal or data-protection advice may be sought where a request is complex or where there is uncertainty about whether information can be disclosed.

Third-party information

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Records may contain information provided by or relating to other individuals or organisations.

The setting will consider the rights and confidentiality of third parties before disclosing information. Information will only be disclosed where it is lawful and appropriate to do so. The setting will not routinely contact every third party named in a child's records for permission before responding to a parent's request for access. Requests will be considered in accordance with applicable data-protection legislation.

Visitors, students and volunteers

All visitors, students, volunteers and work-experience students will be made aware that they must respect the confidentiality of children, families and staff. Students and volunteers will only have access to information that is necessary for their role and appropriate to their level of responsibility.

They must not:

- discuss children or families outside the setting;
- remove confidential records or information without permission;
- take photographs or recordings of children using personal devices; or
- share information about children, families or the setting on social media.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

The safety and welfare of children is our paramount consideration. Confidentiality must never be used as a reason for failing to share information where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where staff have concerns about a child's safety or welfare, they must follow the setting's Safeguarding Policy and report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy DSL as appropriate.

Information will be shared with relevant safeguarding agencies where this is necessary to protect a child, in accordance with safeguarding procedures and applicable law.

Breaches of confidentiality

Any member of staff who becomes aware of a possible breach of confidentiality or data protection must report it to the setting manager/owner immediately.

The setting will consider the nature and seriousness of the incident and take appropriate action, including any necessary steps to protect children, families or staff and any required reporting or notification.

All staff are expected to take confidentiality seriously and to follow the setting's data-protection and information-security procedures.

This policy was agreed by the staff of Playhouse Pre-School Broadwater.

Adapted on 23rd April 2015 and will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed on 23rd September 2026 by Z. Munford