

Policy Statement

'Confidential information is information that is not normally in the public domain or readily available from another source, it should have a degree of sensitivity and value and be subject to a duty of confidence. A duty of confidence arises when one person provides information to another in circumstances where it is reasonable to expect that the information will be held in confidence.'

Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)

Bluebell Childcare staff and managers hold a 'confidential relationship' with our families. It is our intention to respect the privacy all staff members, children, families and anybody who we may come into contact with. We ensure that all families can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their child. We adhere to record keeping systems that meet legal requirements. The way in which we store information is in line with the framework set out by the Data Protection Act (1998) and the human rights act (1998).

To ensure that everyone working within and using our services can do so with confidence, Bluebell Childcare adheres to the following:

- All information shared with us by the parent is treated as confidential within the setting. Certain information such as Safeguarding issues would be kept on a need to know basis with only relevant staff members being informed.
- Any information shared between parents in a discussion or training group is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not discussed outside of it.
- All records are stored securely in a lockable office.
- Staff will not discuss any individual children, other than for purposes of curriculum, planning, safeguarding or group management, with people other than the parents/carers of that child. Unless stated on the child's registration forms e.g. some information would be shared with a child-minder.
- Information given by the parents/carers to Bluebell Childcare will not be passed on to other adults or professionals without prior consent from the parents.
- Any issues with regards to staffing employment whether paid or voluntary will remain confidential to management involved in making personnel decisions. Where necessary we may seek advice on issues from an independent HR company who will be bound to a confidentiality agreement.
- Any anxieties/evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential safeguarding folder and will not be shared within the setting except with relevant staff members e.g. the key person, the manager and Bluebell Childcares management team.
- All staff and voluntary placement students will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- All candidates applying for a role within Bluebell Childcare are required to read and sign a confidentiality policy & agreement. Candidates must maintain confidentiality on any information that they receive during selection process, regardless of whether they are offered a role. Interviews are held during operational hours, any information about children/families and staff is strictly confidential.

Confidential records regarding staff and children are held secure in a lockable office. (Personnel files are held off site by Emma Lenander, an overview of staff personnel is kept in individual continuous professional development logs). These are only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them (EYFS 2014).

Bluebell Childcare ensures all staff understand the need to protect the privacy of all children. Staff are also aware of the legal requirements that govern this ensuring all information relating to a child is handled in a way that ensures confidentiality (EYFS 2014).

As per Bluebell Childcares' safeguarding and child protection policies all staff are aware that in times of disclosure staff are not to promise confidentiality to the child.

Parent access to records procedure

Parents may request access to any confidential records held on their child and family following the procedure 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 setting Manager.
- The setting Leader is to inform the Management team and send the parent a written acknowledgement.
- Bluebell Childcare commits to providing access within 14 days although this may be extended.
- Bluebell Childcare's Management team would prepare the file for viewing.
- Any third parties would be contacted stating that a request for disclosure has been received asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. Copies of these letters are retained on a file.
- 'Third Parties' include all family members who may be referred to in records. This also includes workers from other agencies including children's social care, the health authority etc. it is not unusual for outside agencies for refusal of disclosure as they prefer to be contacted directly.
- When all of the consents/refusals have been received these are attached to the copy of the request form.
- A photocopy of the complete file is to be kept.
- The Management team would then go through the file to remove any information regarding a refusal from a third party. A thick black marker is to be used to score through any reference to a refused third party.
- The remaining file should contain all information recorded by Bluebell Childcare. This should detail any work initiated and followed by in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.
- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who would be invited in to discuss the contents. The file is never handed straight over, but should be gone through by the setting leader so that it can be fully explained.

- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against Bluebell Childcare or another third party agency.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please refer to our Safeguarding policy.

Legal Framework

- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Human Rights Act (1998)

Further Guidance

- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)

This policy was adopted by Bluebell Childcare on 01/09/2014

This policy was updated by Bluebell Childcare on 28/04/2016

Signed

Evaluated and reviewed.....

Signature sheet

Staff, prospective staff and students must sign this sheet to confirm that they have read and understood the Confidentiality Policy.

Signature

Print Name

Date