INFORMATION SHARING POLICY

Policy Statement

"Sharing information is an intrinsic part of any frontline practitioners' job when working with children and young people. The decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals' lives. It could ensure that an individual receives the right services at the right time and prevent a need from becoming more acute and difficult to meet. At the other end of the spectrum, it could be the difference between life and death."

Cranford staff, and ex members of staff agree that they must not share any information about parents and children or speak about the nursery in a derogative or negative way or make any slanderous comments about the nursery, the nursery staff, Fiona and her family, the parents and the children.
Legal action may follow if staff members are found to be slanderous in any way towards the nursery which may be detrimental to the business or cause stress to an individual.
Parents are politely requested to be respectful towards staff of the nursery and to not speak about them or speak too them in a derogative and negative manner.

Transition to school: Your child's new school teacher will phone to speak to the nursery and may ask to visit your child in nursery, by signing your nursery contract you have given permission for us to speak with your child's teacher if you do not wish for us to disclose any sensitive information then please put this in writing to Fiona Harcourt.

Early years development and additional needs
If we identify that your child would benefit from additional help in his/her development or a parent would like help and support with their child in the home then we can help you to do this. We will firstly discuss this with you the parent gain your permission and ask you to sign an authorization slip for example:

I give consent for Cranford Nursery's Management team to contact the necessary multi agencies to support my child's early years development.
These agencies may be:

Child's Health visitor

SALT- Speech and Language Therapist

EHAS - Early help and support team

PSAC – Preschool assessment center

School teacher

Name of Child:
DOB:
Parent sign:
Parent print name:

We recognise that parents have a right to know that the information they share with us will be regarded as confidential, as well as to be informed about the circumstances when, and the reasons why, we are obliged to share information.

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it, or to whom it relates, if it is in the public interest. That is when:

- It is to prevent a crime from being committed or to intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or an adult; or if
  not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

The decision should never be made as an individual, but with the back-up of the management team. The three critical criteria are:

- Where there is evidence that the child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

Procedures

Our procedure is based on the seven golden rules for information sharing as set out in *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (DCSF 2008)*

1 *The Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.*

- **Our policy and procedures on information sharing provide guidance to appropriate sharing of information with external agencies.**

2 *Our aim is to be open and honest with the parent or family from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could, be shared**, and staff and Management MUST seek parental agreement,** unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.*

In our setting we ensure parents:

- Receive information about our *information sharing policy* when starting their child in the setting and that they

Sign our Registration Form to say that they understand the circumstances in which information may be shared with their consent **(and without their consent this will only be when it is a matter of Safeguarding a child)**

- **have information about our safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy; and**
- **have information about the other circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with regard to any special needs the child may have or transition to school.**

3 *we seek advice if we are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.*

- **Managers will contact the department of children's social care for advice where we have doubts or are unsure.**

4 ***We share with consent*** *where appropriate and, on a need to know only basis, and respect the wishes of those* ***who do not consent*** *to share confidential information.*

We may still share information without consent if, in our judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. Our judgement on the facts will be based on the case.

- Guidelines for consent are part of this procedure.

5 *We will always consider safety and well-being: we will base our information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.*

In our setting we:

- Record concerns and discuss these with the settings designated person which is the Manager Fiona Harcourt
- We record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom; and follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.

6 *We will ensure the information we share is Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: We will ensure that the information we share is necessary for the purpose for which we are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, and that it is accurate and up to date and is shared in a timely fashion and is shared securely.*

- Our safeguarding children and child protection policy and children's records policy set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with another agency when making a referral.

7 We will keep a record of our decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If we decide to share, then we record what we have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

- Where information is shared, the reasons for doing so are recorded in the child's file; where it is decided that information is not to be shared that is recorded too.

Consent

Parents MUST be informed that their consent to share information MUST be sought before any information is shared in most cases, as well as the kinds of circumstances when their consent may not be sought, or their refusal to give consent may be overridden. We do this as follows

- Our policies and procedures set out our responsibility regarding gaining consent to share information and when it may not be sought or overridden.
- We may cover this verbally when the child starts and include this in our parent contract. This policy can also be found on our website.
- Parents sign our Registration Form at registration to say they understand this.
- **Parents are asked to give written consent to share information about any additional needs their child may have, or to pass on child development summaries to the next provider eg School, health visitor, EHAS, PSAC, Kim Games/ Sarah Miles DESC.**
- **We consider the following questions when we need to share:**
  - **Is there 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 requiring us to share the information?**
  - **If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest for us to share information?**
  - **If the decision is to share, are we sharing the right information in the right way?**
  - **Have we properly recorded our decision?**

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 also see our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

All Staff and ex staff members must not share any information or speak about the nursery in a negative way or make slanderous comments about the nursery, the staff, Fiona and her family, the parents or the children. Legal action may follow if staff are found to be slanderous in any way that may be detrimental to the business or cause stress to any individual connected to the nursery.

Legal Framework

Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers HM GOV July 2018
Data Protection Act (2018)

This policy was adopted by F. Harcourt

Date: 1st August 2018

reviewed: 1/1/25