

Annex B: Information sharing policy statement

Basis of policy

This statement is based on the principles set out in the cross- government guidance 'Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers'. The most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to safeguard and protect a child.

Strategic

[Name of supplier] will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and DSO 19/2012 (Detention and Escorting Safeguarding Children Policy), and have regard to the above mentioned cross-Government guidance.

We will ensure, through our Safeguarding Children Manager/Safeguarding Lead, that effective information sharing about risk and risk of harm is promoted within the centre and with external agencies through clear systems, standards and protocols. **[Refer here to any systems, standards or protocols agreed locally to cover information sharing across disciplines within the centre and with outside agencies, and attach as appropriate]**.

We will ensure through training and the dissemination of the cross-Government guidance and DSO 19/2012 **[include mention of any centre-specific guidance]** that relevant staff within the centre understand what to do and the most effective ways of sharing information if they believe that a child may be a child in need, including those children suffering or at risk of suffering harm, or may require particular services internally or from external agencies.

Operational

We will explain to every child on admission, and again during induction, what and how information will, or could, be shared and why, and seek their agreement - except where to do so would put that child or others at increased risk of significant harm, or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the security of the centre or the prevention/detection of a crime. It should be noted that a refusal to give consent to share information is not in itself a barrier to disclosure (see point 7 below).

We will always consider the safety or welfare of a child when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering, or is at risk of, significant harm, the child's safety and welfare will be the over-riding consideration.

We will, where possible, respect the wishes of the child where they do not consent to share confidential information. However, we will still share information if, in our judgement on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need to over-ride that lack of consent and the sharing is in accordance with data protection principles.

We will ensure that arrangements are in place for providing advice and support to any members of staff who may have doubts about whether to share information in an individual case.

We will ensure that the information we share is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.

We will always record the reasons for our decision – whether it is to share information or not.