

Information Sharing

What parents and carers need to know

We understand that information about you or your child is personal. We will treat it with care and respect.

Sometimes, sharing information is an important part of keeping children safe and making sure they receive the right help and support.

Why might information be shared?

Information may be shared to:

- keep your child safe and promote their wellbeing;
- understand your child's needs and circumstances;
- identify concerns early;
- help professionals make informed decisions;
- arrange the right support; or
- take action if there is a concern about harm or risk.

There does not have to be a particular child protection threshold before relevant information can be shared. The duty also covers early help, prevention and unmet needs.

What information might be shared?

We will share information that is relevant, necessary and proportionate to the circumstances.

This might include information about your child's:

- health and wellbeing;
- behaviour or attendance;
- development and support needs;
- family or home circumstances, where relevant to their welfare; and
- safety or any concerns about risk or harm.

Information about another person connected to your child may also be shared when it is relevant to your child's safety or welfare.

We will not automatically share everything we know. Information should be limited to what is needed for the safeguarding purpose.

Who might receive the information?

Information may be shared with professionals or organisations who need it to safeguard your child or promote their welfare.

Depending on the circumstances, this could include:

- your child's school, nursery or college;
- children's social care;
- health services;
- the police;
- local authorities; or
- other relevant safeguarding professionals or organisations.

Information should be shared securely and in accordance with data protection requirements.

Do you have to give permission?

Not always.

Where the information sharing duty applies, relevant information must be shared when the legal requirements are met. Your consent is not required in these circumstances.

We will not ask you to give permission when information must be shared. Instead, where it is safe and practical, we will explain what is being shared, why it is being shared and who it is being shared with.

What about confidentiality?

We aim to be open and respectful with families. However, information cannot always be kept confidential when it relates to a child's safety or welfare.

There are very limited circumstances where a professional may decide not to share information because sharing it would be more harmful to the child than not sharing it. This is expected to be rare.

We understand you may have worries

We recognise that finding out information about your family is being shared can feel difficult, upsetting or worrying.

Your views and feelings matter. We will listen to your questions and concerns and explain the reasons for information sharing as clearly as we can.

However, if information must be shared to safeguard and promote your child's welfare, being unhappy or disagreeing with the decision does not prevent it from being shared.

Our aim is to work openly and respectfully with families while making sure children are safe and receive the support they need.