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PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The playschool's work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information.

To ensure that all those using and working in the playschool can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

Developmental Records

- Playschool will keep observations of children in the setting, samples of their work, summary developmental reports and records of achievement.
- They are usually kept at Playschool and can be accessed, and contributed to, by staff, the child and the child's parents.
- Parents have access to their own child's developmental record at any time
- Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for the purposes of curriculum planning / group management, with people other than the parents/carers of that child.

Personal Records

- Playschool will also keep personal records including registration and admission forms, signed consents, and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters.
- Information given by parents/carers to the playschool leader will only be passed on to other relevant staff if appropriate.
- Any anxieties/evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the group except with the child's playschool leaders, key person and the chair.
- Students observing or assisting within the playschool will be advised of the confidentiality policy and required to respect it.
- These confidential records are stored in a locked filing cabinet.
- Parents have access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.
- All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the playschool to the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- Staff will not discuss any information about any child outside of the playschool premises.

Information Sharing

- There are times when we are required to share information about a child or their family. These are when:

- there are concerns a child is or may be suffering significant harm
- the 'reasonable cause to believe' a child is or may be suffering significant harm is not clear
- there are concerns about 'serious harm to adults' (such as domestic violence or other matters affecting the welfare of parents)
- We explain to families about our duty to share information for the above reasons.
- Where we have concerns as above, we would normally gain consent from families to share. This does not have to be in writing, but we record in the child's file that we have gained verbal consent as a result of discussing a concern that we need to refer to a social care agency.
- We do not seek consent from parents to share information where we believe that a child, or sometimes a vulnerable adult, may be endangered by seeking to gain consent. For example where we have cause to believe a parent may try to cover up abuse, or threaten a child.
- Where we take a decision to share information without consent that is recorded in the child's file and the reason clearly stated.
- Where evidence to support our concerns are not clear we may seek advice from our Local Children's Safeguarding Board (Customer First) or the NSPCC.
- We only share relevant information that is accurate, factual, non-judgemental and up to date.

Other records

- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Students on Pre-school Learning Alliance or other recognised qualifications and training, when they are observing in the setting, are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

Access to personal records

Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family following the procedure below.

- A request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility may be made in writing to the setting leader.
- The setting leader informs the chairperson of the management committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
- The setting commits to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.
- The setting's leader and chairperson of the management committee prepare the file for viewing.
- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. A copy of these letters is retained on the file.
- 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
- It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
- When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken.
- The setting leader and chairperson of the management committee go through the file and remove any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file.
- What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.
- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the setting leader, so that it can be explained.

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

Premises Security

The decision on distribution of keys/codes to the setting is made by the Chair/Business Manager/Play leaders, and access to these will be signed for and our procedures adhered to.

Social Network Sites

Social networking outside of work hours, on non school/education setting or other establishment-issue equipment, is the personal choice of all school/education setting or other establishment staff members, committee members, students and volunteers. Owing to the public nature of such websites staff members, committee members, students and volunteers must comply with the guidelines in our Social Networking Policy.

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 see also our policy on safeguarding children and child protection.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Martlesham & Kesgrave Playschools	
Held on (date)		
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee		
Role of signatory (e.g. chairperson etc.)		
This policy was reviewed on		(date)