

**Confidentiality and Access to Personal Records Policy**

**Our Aim**

The Playgroup’s work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information. We aim to ensure that all those using and working at St Giles Playgroup can do so with confidence. We respect the confidentiality of children and families through the following procedures.

**General Points**

The following document outlines the Setting’s policy regarding confidentiality.

All new members of staff and volunteers are required to read this policy as part of their induction procedure. The policy is updated annually and members of staff are expected to re-read the policy once it has been updated.

Parents/carers of children at the Pre-School are made aware that all the Pre-School’s policies are available for them to read.

**Confidentiality Policy and Procedure**

**Our Procedures**

St Giles Playgroup is registered with the ICO (Information Commissioner’s Office). Information is stored in paper format, on a laptop / Kindle or in a storage cloud. Paper files and the laptop are stored in locked cabinets in the main Playgroup Hall when the setting is closed. The laptop, Kindles and the storage cloud are all password protected. Only those people with a legitimate reason will have access to personal records. Children’s personal information is kept for as long as they attend Playgroup. Once the child leaves Pre-School their file of personal information will be returned to them or passed on to their new setting. The childrens’ Learning Journals are kept using an on-line system called Tapestry which has been approved by the Foundation Stage Forum. Using Tapestry, practitioners are able to take observations of each child’s progress through the EYFS. Samples of children’s work may be kept in a separate portfolio. Parents/carers can have ready access to their child’s Learning Journal, but will not have access to information about any other child. As part of the registration process, parents/carers are asked if they give permission for Pre-School to share information with other settings and outside agencies. Parents/carers are informed before contact is made with outside agencies. Under the Children’s and Families Act 2014, names and addresses, contact numbers and dates of birth of each child, along with contact details of parents/carers are accessed solely by the Pre-School Manager and practitioners working in the setting. These are kept securely locked in a lockable cupboard. If necessary the Pre-School may have information about children which includes Individual Support Plans, medical records, reports etc. Staff will not discuss individual children with people other than the parents/carers of that child, other than for the purposes of planning for the child’s individual needs as planned through the EYFS or for Safeguarding reasons. Staff understand the need for confidentiality when discussing a child. Staff relaying children’s information or discussing a child with another practitioner are aware of other adults (parents/carers) assisting in the environment. Information given by parents/carers to the Playgroup Manager will not be passed on to other adults without permission. The setting has a separate E-Safety/Mobile Phone Policy regarding the use of cameras, phones and the internet (including social media) as well as a separate GDPR Policy.

If conversations need to take place with parents/carers/other agencies that require privacy, these can take place in either the kitchen, the large walk-in cupboard or the corridor.

**Transition from Playgroup**

Playgroup liaises with the setting a child will be moving on to with regard to that child’s progress through their Learning Journey and any other needs the child may have. Such discussions do not take place without the parents/carers prior knowledge. Practitioners will write a transition report for each child which will cover their progress through their Learning Journeys. A copy of this is sent to the school they will move on to. A copy is also stored on Tapestry.

**Safeguarding**

Safeguarding concerns that may arise will be recorded by the Child Protection Liaison Officer and Pre-School Manager. This information is stored in a lockable filing cabinet and is passed on to the child’s next setting when they leave Playgroup.

**Staff Personal Details**

Information relating to staff’s personal details, contract information, pay and employment issues are kept in a lockable filing cabinet which is accessed by the Playgroup Manager, The Deputy Manager and the Committee Chair. Employment records are kept for as long as is deemed necessary by the Manager.

**Access to Personal Records Procedure**

Parents may request access to any 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 Playgroup Manager.
* The Manager informs the Chair of the Committee and sends a written acknowledgement.
* We commit to providing access within 14 days, although this may be extended.
* The Playgroup Manager and Committee Chair 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 any information provided by them to the person who has made the request. A copy of these letters will be retained on file.
* The term “third parties” refers to all those who have contributed to the file, including family members, social workers, health visitors and other agencies. It is usual for other agencies to refuse content to disclose, preferring the individual to approach them directly.
* 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 made.
* The Manager and the Committee Chair 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 any information they have added to the file.
* What remains is the information recorded by the setting for which we have obtained permission to disclose. This is called the “clean copy”.
* The “clean copy” is photocopied for the person who has requested to see it. That individual is then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be handed straight over but should be gone through with the Manager so that it can be explained.
* Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for legal action against the setting or a third party.
* All of the undertakings above are subject to the paramount objective of the setting which is to protect the safety and wellbeing of the children. Please also refer to our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and our General Data Protection Regulation Policy.