

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT OF INTENT

At the Wishing Well Family Centre it is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers, while ensuring that they access high quality early years care and education in our setting.

We respect the right for all information, records and observations to be treated with respect and with due attention to confidentiality and privacy. However, "the welfare of the child is paramount" (Children Order NI) and this means that confidentiality comes second to the right of the child to be protected from harm.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children.

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting -

Developmental records

These include observations of children in the setting, samples of their work, summary developmental reports and records of achievement. These are usually kept in the playroom and can be accessed, and contributed to, by staff or the child's parents.

Personal records

These include registration and admission forms, signed consents, and correspondence concerning the child or family, observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters. Also included are reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies.

- These confidential records are stored in a lockable file or cabinet and are kept secure by the person in charge in an office or other suitably safe place.
- 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. Information is passed on only on a need to know basis.

Access to personal records

- Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family by 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 setting Manager.
- All registration forms and records of children attending the Wishing Well will be kept by the Early Years Manager in a secure place for one year and then destroyed confidentially. The accident and incident book should be retained indefinitely.

- Any concerns relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the nursery except with the child's key worker/room supervisor and the manager (only on a need to know basis).
- Information may be shared with Social Services and/or Department of Education in accordance with their guidance and regulation.

Other guidelines

- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- All staff including students or volunteers, parents/carers and committee members will be made aware of this confidentiality policy. Students/volunteers will not have access to confidential documents.
- Students when they are observing in the setting are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.
- No details regarding the children and their families should be discussed outside the Nursery environment.
- Written permission will be sought from the parent/carers to take photographs of their children for use in the nursery. For any photograph to be used by students or for use outside the nursery, extra verbal/written permission will be asked for.

Any breach of confidentiality by any member of staff or committee will lead to disciplinary action.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well being of the child.