

Wigan & Leigh **Young Carers**

INFORMATION SHARING POLICY

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES:
ADOPTED ON:
REVIEW DATE:

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the information sharing policy is to support employees and volunteers in their decision making around sharing information

The information sharing policy is for Trustees, Employees and Volunteers.

The information sharing policy may need to be read in conjunction with the data protection policy, the privacy and cookie policy and the safeguarding policy.

Policy statement

We at Wigan and Leigh Young Carers recognise that parents have a right to know that information they share will be regarded as confidential as well as be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information.

We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it or to whom it relates, if it is in the public interest. That is when:

- It is to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where a crime might have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult; or
- The outcome of not sharing information could be worse than the outcome of having shared it. The decision should never be made as an individual, but with the back-up of the Project Manager or Safeguarding Lead The three critical criteria are:
 - Where there is evidence that the child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm.
 - Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm

To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime.

Procedures

Our procedures are based on the 7 golden rules for information sharing as set out on Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services 2018

Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about a living person is shared appropriately.

Our Policy and procedures on information sharing provide guidance for appropriate sharing of information with external agencies.

Be open and honest. Explain to families how, when and why information will be shared about them and with whom. Seek consent to share information, unless it puts the child at risk or undermines a criminal investigation.

In our service we ensure parents:

- Receive information about our information sharing policy when starting their child in the setting and they sign a form to say they understand circumstances when information may be shared without their consent. This will only be when it is a matter of safeguarding a child or a vulnerable adult. This is on our registration form.
- Have information about our Safeguarding policy.
- Have information about the circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies, for example, with regards to special needs.

Seek advice when there are doubts about possible significant harm to children and others. Managers contact children's social care for advice where they have doubts or are unsure.

Obtain consent where appropriate. Respect the wishes of children and parents not to consent to share confidential information. However, in the interests of the child, know when it is reasonable to override their wish.

Guidelines for consent are part of this procedure.

Volunteers will have been trained in safeguarding procedures, including information sharing, and are able to advise staff appropriately. Consider the safety and welfare of the child when making a decision about sharing information - if there are concerns regarding 'significant harm' the child's well-being and safety is paramount.

In our charity we:

- Record concerns and discuss these with the charity's designated person i.e. the Project Manager and/or designated Safeguarding Lead (currently the Chair of the Board of Trustees).
- Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom.
- Follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.

Information shared should be accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose it is being shared for shared only with those who need to know and shared securely.

Our Safeguarding Policy and Data Protection Policy set out how and where information should be recorded and what information should be shared with other agencies when making a referral.

Consent

Parents have a right to be informed that their consent to share information will be sought in most cases, as well as the kind of circumstances when their consent may be sought, or their refusal to give consent may be overridden. We do this as follows:

- Our Policies and procedures set out our responsibility regarding gaining consent to share information and when it may not be sought or overridden.

- We may cover this verbally when a young carer starts with our service. Parents sign a form at registration to say they understand this.
- Parents are asked to give written consent to share information about any additional needs their child may have.
- We consider the following questions when we need to share:
 - Is there a legitimate purpose to sharing the information?
 - Does the information enable the person to be identified
 - Is the information confidential?
 - If the information is confidential, do you have the consent to share?
 - Is there a statutory duty or court order to share information?
 - If consent is refused, or there are good reasons not to seek consent, is there sufficient public interest to share Information?
 - If the decision is to share, are you sharing the right information in the right way? - Have you properly recorded your decision?

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the service, which is to preserve the safety and well-being of the child, in line with Wigan Children's Safeguarding Board.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. Significant changes will be reported to the Board of Trustees.