

Harrold Pre-School Policies



Record Keeping Policy

Objectives

- Children's records are stored separately from their developmental records.
- Children's personal files contain registration information as specified in relevant procedure documentation.
- Ethnicity data is only recorded where parents have identified the ethnicity of their child themselves
- Confidentiality is maintained by keeping records in a file only accessible to staff members and restricted to only those who need to know. Records are shared with parents on request.
- Staff know how and when to share information effectively if they believe a family may require a particular service in order to achieve positive outcomes
- Staff know how to share information if they believe a child to be in need or at risk of suffering harm
- Guidance and training for staff specifically covers the sharing of information between professions, organisations and agencies, as well as between themselves, and arrangements for training takes account of the value of multi-agency as well as single agency working.

Records

The following information and documentation is also held:

- Name, address and contact details of the provider and all staff employed on the premises
- Name address and contact details of any other person who will regularly be in unsupervised contact with children
- A daily record of all children looked after on the premises, their hours of attendance and their named key worker
- Certificate of registration displayed and shown to parents on request
- Records of risk assessments

Record Keeping Procedure

When a parent decides they would like their child to attend the Pre-School, an application form will be completed which will provide basic essential information about the child and the child's parents. This includes:

- Full name and name the child is usually known as
- Date of birth
- Name of parents (those who have parental responsibility)
- Name of any other significant adults in the home who do not have parental responsibility
- Home address, telephone number and any mobile phone number of parents/significant adults
- Work contact telephone numbers
- Emergency contact name, address and telephone
- Any other carer who regularly collects the child

Safeguarding, Welfare, Health and Special Needs Inclusion Issues

- Details of any illnesses, disabilities or allergies
- Whether there will be any specific care and educational needs that arise from any of these conditions. Will the child need an IEP based on these needs?

- Details of any medication that the child regularly takes
- Details of hospital consultant if applicable
- Health visitor's name and telephone number
- Social care worker's name and telephone number if applicable
- Reason for social care worker involvement
- Any other professional who has regular contact with the child/family

Linguistic and Cultural needs

- How does the family describe their child/family's cultural background?
- What is the family's religion?
- Are there specific care and educational needs arising from the child's culture and religion, e.g. hair and skin care, dietary needs and preferences, festivals celebrated etc.
- What languages are spoken at home and/or by the child?
- What skills does the child have in their home language?
- What skills does the child have in English where this is not the home language?
- Will the child need a bilingual support plan?

On the application form parents will show their consent for the following:

- The use of plasters for cuts or grazes
- The application of sun cream
- To be taken out of preschool on local outings
- Emergency treatment from staff qualified in first aid, or from a paramedic
- The use of photographs/video of their children for display and record keeping purposes

Children's records will be kept in a folder marked Application Forms and will be kept separate to their developmental records.

Children's developmental records will be kept in individual blue ring binders/on iPad using programme entitled 'Tapestry' and will be shared with parents upon request. Access to each file will be restricted to the parent/carer of the child.

Children in Need

According to local procedures for allocating places for children in need, social care services will provide information usually based on the criteria in the assessment framework

- The child's developmental needs
- The parent's capacity to parent the child
- Environmental factors
- Social Care Workers inform the Safeguard Lead/Leader if there are child protection concerns or if the child has a Child Protection Plan in place.

Children referred as 'in need' will have an 'Individual Care Plan' agreed by the key person, Leader and parent. A Social Care Worker or other professional may be involved in this. This will set the overall goals of the placement for the child and family.

The Individual Care Plan will be reviewed at intervals agreed with parents and Social Care Worker.

Confidentiality and Recording Information

- Anything that happens between the family, the child and the setting will be kept confidential to the setting. In exceptional circumstances information will be shared, for example with social care or the police.
- Staff will discuss children's general progress and wellbeing together in meetings, but more sensitive information will be restricted to the leader and key worker and will be shared with other staff on a need to know basis.
- Staff will not discuss children with staff who are not involved in the child's care, nor with other parents or anyone else outside of the Pre-School.
- Discussions with other professionals will take place within a professional framework and will not be on an informal or ad-hoc basis.
- It is important that staff explain to parents that sometimes it will be necessary to write things down in their child's file and the reasons why.
- When recording information staff will make sure that entries are dated correctly and the time included where it is necessary to do so. The person making the entry will sign each time.
- The information recorded will be clear and unambiguous; it will record fact, not opinion, although it will be acceptable to write concerns that may arise from what you have noted.
- Records will be non-judgemental and will not reflect any biased or discriminatory attitude.
- Not everything will need to be recorded, but significant events, discussions and telephone conversations will be recorded at the time that they take place.
- When deciding what is relevant it is usually the things that cause concern that need to be recorded as well as the action taken to deal with the concern. This may be about talking to a parent about being late or behind with fees, or discussing the concern of the key person that the child has not been eating much lately, or something more serious, like a bruise, which may lead to a child protection referral.
- Where information is shared, the reasons for doing so will be recorded in the file; it will also be recorded that a decision not to share information is taken.
- Most information will be kept on a manual file. However, staff may use a computer to type reports, or letters. Where this is the case, the typed document will be deleted from the PC and only the hard copy will be kept.
- Where it is helpful to keep an electronic copy this will be downloaded onto a disc, labelled with the child's name and kept securely in the child's file. NO documents will be kept on the hard drive.

Parent's Access to Records

- The parent will have a right to see information that the setting has compiled and keeps on them.
- If a parent wishes to see the file, a written request will be made, which the setting will acknowledge in writing, informing the parent that an arrangement will be made for him/her to see the file contents, subject to third party consent, and will allow 14 working days for the file to be made ready.
- The Pre-School Leader will inform the Chair of the Committee
- The Pre-School leader will go through the file with the Chair and will ensure all documents have been filed correctly, entries are in date order and that there are no missing pages. They will note any information, entry or correspondence or other document mentioning a third party.
- Each of those individuals will be written to explaining that the subject of the file is requesting sight of the file which contains a reference to them, stating what this is.
- They will be asked to reply in writing to the Pre-School leader giving or refusing consent for disclosure of that material.
- Copies of these letter and their replies will be kept on the child's file.
- When the consent/refusals have been received the Pre-School Leader will take a photocopy of the whole file. On the copy file the document not to be disclosed will be removed or notes pertaining to that individual in the contact pages blanked out using a thick marker pen.

- The copy file will then be checked by the Pre-School leader and legal advisors will verify that the file has been prepared appropriately.
- The 'cleaned' copy will be photocopied again and collated for the parent to see.
- The Pre-School leader will inform the parent that the file is now ready and will invite them to make an appointment to view it.
- The Pre-School leader and Chairperson will meet with the parent to go through the file, and will explain the process and the content records about their child and the work that has been done.
- It is an offence to remove material that is controversial or to rewrite records to make them more acceptable. If procedures and guidelines have been followed, the material must reflect an accurate and non-judgemental account of the work done with the family.
- In a case where the setting has made a mistake – for example in making a child protection referral, the parent cannot ask for that to be removed. However, they can ask for a written acknowledgement that a mistake has been made and an apology to be sent to them with a copy on the file.
- If there are any controversial aspects to the content of a parents file legal advice will be sought.

Information Sharing Procedure

The Pre-School Leader will explain to families how, when and why information will be shared about them and with whom. That consent is normally obtained, unless it puts the child at risk or undermines a criminal investigation

Pre-School Leader and staff will:

- Ensure parents have access to the Pre-School's Safeguarding Children policy.
- Ensure parents have information about the circumstances when information will be shared with external agencies for example with regard to any special needs the child may have or transition to school.

The Pre-School will consider the safeguarding 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.

Pre-School Leader and staff will:

- Record concerns and discuss these with the settings designated Safeguard Lead for child protection matters. Record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and with whom.
- Follow the procedures for reporting concerns and record keeping.
- The Child Protection procedures are clear about what constitutes a 'concern' under S47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Pre-School Leader will discuss concerns with the Chair person.