

NEW HOPE

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

New Hope Worcester will abide by the laws of Data Protection, and ensure that the dissemination of any information on children and families will only be made available to appropriate staff members. We will respect the privacy of children and their parents/carers while ensuring they access high quality provision and care.

The nature of our business is providing places for children with complex special needs and disabilities; this requires a variety of information to be written on the children and family which ultimately needs to be shared with staff members concerned. Whilst we understand that it is essential for information to be shared with all relevant people, we will also ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times.

All employees of New Hope-Worcester have a duty to safeguard information and not to allow its dissemination inappropriately, unnecessarily or negligently.

TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY, THE FOLLOWING RULES AND GUIDELINES WILL APPLY:

- It will always be made clear to families that any information that they pass on may be shared with the Managers.
- If a parent asks a member of staff to keep something secret, they should be advised that this is not possible and a Manager should be informed of the conversation.
- If a parent asks about another child or family, under no circumstances should workers give information, not even confirmation that they are working with them.
- Where information indicates that someone is at risk of harm or abuse, or where it gives rise to suspicion of illegal acts (past present or future), then workers must inform their supervisor.
- Managers must always ensure there is a private room, away from children and the general day to day activities for private conversations. Caution should be taken when discussing issues with or concerning children and families. Public places are not appropriate for these discussions.
- If staff are approached by other professionals or individuals seeking information regarding a child or family, they should refer the matter to the Manager.
- Staff must never pass information over the telephone to an unknown caller, regardless of the position that he or she claims to hold.
- All staff and volunteers have a duty to keep information confidential inside and outside of New Hope-Worcester. This includes social events out of hours where children's names and information should not be spoken about in general conversation. This is the responsibility of each individual staff member.
- The rules of confidentiality also apply to information of New Hope-Worcester staff. Home addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information will never be given out to clients or other staff members and staff should be vigilant of keeping confidential information on their colleagues.

- Confidentiality also applies to paperwork. All paperwork will be stored in filing cabinets and only accessed by managers. The filing cabinets should be kept locked and stored in the Managers office. Family information should never be left in cars.
- The child protection folder will be stored separately and locked. The only people to have access will be the Child Protection Officer and/or New Hope-Worcester managers. Information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- Volunteers will be asked to respect our confidentiality policy and are required to adhere to the policy.

WE RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- Parents/carers will have access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information on any other child.
- Any form completed on a child, that needs to be signed by a parent/carer will always be on a separate page from any other child's information and only their child's information will be shown to the parent/carer.
- Parent/carer permission will be sought for photographs and videos and internet images. Permission will be given via special forms designed to seek permission for such purposes.