

The importance of confidentiality and data protection for home based childcare



The importance of Confidentiality and Data Protection for home based childcare Childminder must handle all information that she has on the child as confidential and should be shared only with the child's parents and the child. It is essential to handle data about children and families in a confidential way, due to that they have a legal right to privacy. It is equally important that information should not be passed on without written approval of the parents or carer, because they have the right to give or deny their consent before the childminder may take certain action with respect to their child. For example the parents or carer approval is needed to discuss information about the children with professionals such as GP, health visitors or teachers. Therefore it is important also to get permission to share the child's learning journey with other professionals. In second place confidentiality and data protection also means that all information about children and families should not be discussed with a friend or other parents. Therefore there are only two sets of circumstances to share information: * Parents or carers gave the written approval for it. * It is essential to do so in the best of interest of the child, for example safeguarding or medical emergency. All information about children and families is sensitive. So that all documentation, reports, notes about the child should be kept in a safe place such, as in a filing cabinet, which can be locked, and not removed from the childminder's home. Furthermore all information stored on computer must be password protected. In the same way photographs of the children can only be taken with the written consent of the parents and carers. Data protection Act exist to strike a balance between the rights of individuals to privacy and to use data for the purposes of the business. The purpose of data protection legislation is to make sure that the personal data is not

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processed without the knowledge of the individuals. The act of data protection introduced basic rules of registration for data users and right of access to that data for the individuals who are related to it. The childminders have data protection responsibilities. First of all they need to protect the children and their families and maintain sense of trust between parent and staff. Most important is that if they keep records of the children's health, behaviour or development on the computer or takes digital photograph of the children, they " will be expected to register with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)" (ncma. org. uk, 2013). The points that I may include in my confidentiality and Data protection policy are: Confidentiality Policy * All parents receive a copy of my policies and procedures, which detail how I run my setting. * My certificate of registration is displayed and available to all parents. * I am aware of my responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. * I maintain a record of parents' and/or emergency contact details, the contact details of the child's GP and appropriate signed consent forms. * If a child is identified as a child in need (section 17 of the Children Act 1989) I will, normally with the parent's permission, give appropriate information to referring agencies. * I expect parents to inform me of any changes in the child's home circumstances, care arrangements or any other change which may affect the child's behaviour such as a new baby, parents' separation, divorce, new partner or any bereavement. * All information shared will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed without the parents' consent, except as required by law, for example, if there appears to be a child protection issue. Please see my Safeguarding Children policy. * I expect parents to keep private and confidential any sensitive information they may accidentally

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learn about my family, setting or the other children and families attending, unless it is a child protection issue. * Ofsted may require to my see records at any time. * Parents have the right to inspect all records about their child at any time. * All significant incidents are recorded in an incident book and will be shared and discussed with parents so that together we can work to resolve any issues. * As a registered provider I must notify Ofsted of any serious accidents, illnesses or injuries or the death of any child whilst in my care and any action I may have taken within 14 days of an incident occurring. * If I am in need of support or advice regarding a serious illness or incident involving a child in my care I may contact National Childminding Association who will log information regarding the incident with regard to their safeguarding policy. An NCMA designated officer will be assigned to my case and all the information given to them will be kept confidentially unless their appears to be a child protection issue which will be reported accordingly. * If an accident or incident involving a child in my care may result in an insurance claim I will contact my public liability insurance provider to discuss my case and be allocated a claim number. This may involve discussing details of the child in my care with a third party. * If I am using the National Childminding Association (NCMA) public liability insurance, the total life of the policy is 21 years and 4 months to enable the child to make a claim against the policy at a later date. Data Protection Policy * I am aware of my responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. * If I keep records relating to individual children on my computer I will ask for the parent's permission. The information will be securely stored for example, in password-protected files, to prevent viewing of the information by others with access to the computer.

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Backup files will be stored on [insert method, for example, a memory stick, DVD or CD] which will be locked away when not being used. * All information on children, families and anyone working with me (if applicable) is kept securely and treated in confidence. Information will only be shared if the parents/carers/co-workers give their permission or there appears to be a child protection issue. All details will be kept confidential and records are kept secure. The details are easily accessible if any information is required for inspection by Ofsted. * All parents will be asked to complete permission forms for use of photos, please see Parent Permission form. Photos will be used for observations. I will be carrying my mobile phone with me when I am on outings to keep emergency contact details and to call for assistance and to contact parents if First Aid is required. My mobile does have a facility to take photo's (this will done in accordance to parental permissions). * I am registered as a Data Controller with the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office). Biography * http://www.ncma.org.uk/childminders/your_business/policies_and_procedures/data_protection.aspx * Riddall-Leech, Sheila (2010): Home-Based Childcare Student Book: Level 3 Unit CYPOP5 * The date protection Act 1998