



## Children's Records and Data Protection

### Introduction

Houghton and Wyton Pre-school is committed to maintaining accurate, relevant, and secure records for every child in our care. We treat all personal data lawfully and respectfully, and in line with the **Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR**, and **EYFS 2023**. This policy explains how children's records are maintained, accessed, and shared.

### Aim

To ensure children's personal data is managed securely and in accordance with legal requirements and safeguarding best practice.

### Objectives

We will:

- Keep accurate, confidential records for every child
- Share information appropriately, lawfully, and in the child's best interests
- Ensure access to records is restricted and clearly recorded
- Follow retention and archiving guidance for all documents

### Roles and Responsibilities

- **Manager:** Oversees the implementation of record keeping procedures and supports staff with access and accuracy
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Maintains safeguarding records and ensures secure sharing with professionals
- **Staff:** Record key information accurately and respectfully; report concerns promptly
- **Parents/Carers:** Provide accurate personal information and update changes as needed

### Implementation Procedures

#### 1. What Information We Collect

Children's files include:

- Personal information: name, address, DOB, family details
- Emergency contacts and permissions
- Development records, SEN support, and behaviour plans
- Safeguarding and health records

#### 2. Principles of Data Protection (UK GDPR Article 5)

We apply the following principles:

- Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency
- Purpose limitation and data minimisation
- Accuracy and timely updating
- Storage limitation and secure handling

#### 3. Access and Security

- Paper records are stored in locked cabinets with restricted access
- Digital files are password-protected and accessible only by authorised users. Parents have the right to request access to their child's personal data, subject to safeguarding exemptions
- Access to safeguarding records is strictly limited to the DSL and Manager

#### 4. Recording Practice

- Records must be:
  - Accurate and objective
  - Dated and signed
  - Written in a professional tone
  - Free from personal opinions, speculation, or labels
- Delays in recording should be avoided; facts and concerns should be logged as close to the event as possible



## 5. Sharing Information

- We share information:
  - With consent, or
  - Without consent only where required by law or in the child's vital interest (e.g. safeguarding)
- We follow the **7 golden rules of information sharing** (see Appendix A)— Summary of the 7 Golden Rules of Information Sharing
- Decisions to share are always recorded

## 6. Dual Settings and External Agencies

- Where a child attends another setting or has professional involvement:
  - Information is shared securely with consent or safeguarding justification
  - Copies of external reports are included in the child's file

## 7. Retention and Archiving

- Children's records are retained in line with statutory guidance:
  - Accident and injury records: 21 years and 3 months
  - Safeguarding records: until the child turns 25
- Files are archived securely and then destroyed appropriately (e.g. shredding)

## Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Manager and Board of Trustees or sooner if legislation or best practice changes. Record-keeping processes are reviewed termly as part of internal audits.

## Legislation and Guidance

- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2023)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Guidance

## Acknowledgment

All staff and trustees must follow this policy. By doing so, they help ensure every child's personal data is managed with confidentiality, accuracy, and care.