



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met.

10.11 Working in Partnership with Other Agencies

Policy statement

Impact Montessori Nursery recognises that effective partnership working with other agencies is an important part of promoting the learning, development, health, safety and wellbeing of children.

We work cooperatively with relevant local and national organisations, professionals and statutory agencies where this supports children and families or enables us to meet our legal, regulatory and safeguarding responsibilities.

We are committed to sharing information responsibly and lawfully. Personal information will only be shared where there is an appropriate lawful basis and where the information is relevant, necessary and proportionate to the purpose for which it is being shared.

We do not sell personal information or share it with organisations for their own unrelated marketing or commercial purposes.

This policy should be read alongside our:

- Privacy Notice;
- Information Sharing Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Children's Records Policy;
- Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy; and
- SEND Policy.

Procedures

1. Partnership working

We work in partnership with appropriate agencies and professionals to promote positive outcomes for children.

Depending on the circumstances, this may include working with:

- Local Authority services;
- health visitors;
- GPs and other health professionals;
- speech and language therapists;
- occupational therapists;

- educational psychologists;
- SEND services;
- children's social care;
- safeguarding partners;
- early help services;
- schools and other early years settings;
- Ofsted and other regulatory bodies;
- the police and emergency services where appropriate;
- voluntary and community organisations;
- family support services;
- other specialist services.

The agencies involved will depend on the needs and circumstances of individual children and families.

2. Information sharing

Impact Montessori Nursery has procedures for sharing information with other agencies.

Information sharing is undertaken in accordance with:

- the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
- the Data Protection Act 2018;
- applicable safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance;
- our Privacy Notice;
- our Information Sharing Policy; and
- our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Before sharing personal information, we consider:

- why the information needs to be shared;
 - whether there is a lawful basis for sharing;
 - whether consent is required;
 - whether the information is relevant and necessary;
 - whether the amount of information being shared is proportionate;
 - who needs to receive the information;
 - how the information will be transferred securely; and
 - whether the decision to share needs to be recorded.
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3. Safeguarding information sharing

Safeguarding responsibilities take priority where a child may be at risk of harm.

Information may be shared without parental consent where there is a lawful basis to do so, including where sharing is necessary to protect a child or another person from harm.

Staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where they are uncertain about whether information should be shared.

We will not delay necessary safeguarding action simply because parental consent has not been obtained where there is another lawful basis for sharing.

4. Information received from other agencies

Information provided to us by another agency or professional will be handled appropriately and confidentially.

We will consider whether the information was:

- provided in confidence;
- provided for a specific purpose;
- subject to any restrictions on further sharing;
- relevant to the child's care or safeguarding;
- accurate and up to date; and
- necessary to retain.

We will respect confidentiality and any restrictions that lawfully apply.

However, information provided by another agency is not automatically subject to a blanket rule that it can never be shared without that agency's consent.

Where we need to share information that originated from another agency, we will consider the applicable data protection requirements, the purpose of the proposed disclosure and any relevant confidentiality or safeguarding considerations.

Where necessary, we will seek advice from the agency that provided the information or from an appropriate professional before sharing it.

5. Working with visiting professionals

Professionals from other agencies may visit the nursery to work with or observe a child where this has been appropriately arranged.

Examples may include:

- health visitors;
- speech and language therapists;
- SEND professionals;
- educational psychologists;
- social workers;
- family support workers;
- other appropriately authorised professionals.

We will:

- welcome visiting professionals and respect their professional roles;
- establish their identity and professional role where appropriate;
- confirm the purpose of the visit;

- ensure that appropriate permissions or other lawful arrangements are in place;
 - provide relevant information where there is a lawful basis for doing so;
 - maintain confidentiality;
 - ensure that visiting professionals follow appropriate safeguarding arrangements.
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6. Unsupervised access to children

Visitors and professionals from other agencies must not have unsupervised access to children unless this has been specifically authorised and is appropriate to their role and the circumstances.

During visits, we will take reasonable steps to ensure that:

- the professional remains appropriately supervised where required;
- they do not have unnecessary access to other children;
- confidentiality is maintained;
- safeguarding arrangements are followed;
- the professional does not access children's records unless authorised and there is a lawful reason to do so.

Any professional working directly with children must comply with the nursery's safeguarding and visitor procedures.

7. Professional boundaries

Staff must not casually or informally discuss named children or families with professionals who are not involved in the child's care.

Staff should not seek informal advice about an identifiable child or family through personal contacts, social media, messaging applications or other unauthorised channels.

Where professional advice is required, staff should use appropriate professional routes and follow the nursery's information-sharing procedures.

8. Multi-agency meetings

Where appropriate, Impact Montessori Nursery may participate in meetings involving other professionals, including:

- Early Help meetings;
- safeguarding meetings;
- child protection meetings;
- Team Around the Family meetings;
- SEND meetings;
- meetings concerning a child's health, development or wellbeing;
- transition meetings with schools or other settings.

We will share only information that is relevant and necessary for the purpose of the meeting.

Where appropriate, the nursery will ensure that relevant information is recorded and that agreed actions are followed up.

9. Supporting children with additional needs

We work with relevant professionals to support children with SEND or other additional needs.

This may include sharing information with:

- the Local Authority SEND team;
- the setting's SENDCo;
- health professionals;
- speech and language services;
- educational psychology services;
- occupational therapy services;
- children's social care;
- schools and other educational settings;
- other specialist services.

Information will be shared in accordance with our SEND Policy, Privacy Notice and Information Sharing Policy.

Parents/carers will normally be involved in partnership working concerning their child. However, where information needs to be shared without consent for safeguarding or another lawful purpose, we will follow the appropriate procedures.

10. Confidentiality

All staff have a responsibility to maintain confidentiality when working with other agencies.

Information will only be disclosed to individuals who have a legitimate reason to receive it.

Information received from one agency will not automatically be shared with another agency simply because it has been received by the nursery.

Staff must consider whether further sharing is lawful, necessary and proportionate.

11. Secure communication

When sharing personal or confidential information with another agency, we will use an appropriate secure method.

This may include:

- secure email systems;
- approved electronic information-sharing systems;
- secure telephone communication;
- secure postal services;
- hand delivery where appropriate.

Sensitive information should not be sent through personal email accounts, personal messaging applications or other unauthorised communication channels.

Where sensitive information is shared verbally, appropriate records should be made where necessary.

12. Recording information-sharing decisions

Where appropriate, significant information-sharing decisions will be recorded.

Records may include:

- the information shared;
- the reason for sharing;
- who received the information;
- when it was shared;
- the lawful basis for sharing;
- whether consent was obtained;
- any relevant safeguarding considerations;
- actions arising from the information shared.

Safeguarding-related information sharing will be recorded in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

13. Signposting and supporting families

Where appropriate, Impact Montessori Nursery may provide parents and carers with information about organisations and services that can offer advice, support or further assistance.

This may include:

- family support services;
- Local Authority services;
- health and wellbeing services;
- SEND support organisations;
- cultural and community organisations;
- financial and welfare advice services;
- organisations supporting parenting and family wellbeing;
- education and training providers;
- specialist voluntary-sector organisations.

Where we signpost a family to another organisation, we will respect the family's privacy and will not disclose personal information to that organisation unless there is a lawful basis for doing so.

14. Consent for partnership working

Where consent is required, we will obtain informed consent and explain:

- what information will be shared;
- who it will be shared with;
- why it is being shared; and
- how the information will be used.

Consent will not be used as the sole basis for information sharing where another lawful basis is more appropriate.

Consent may also be withdrawn where consent is the lawful basis for the processing. Withdrawal of consent does not affect processing that took place before consent was withdrawn.

15. When partnership working involves safeguarding concerns

Where another agency raises a safeguarding concern about a child, or where Impact Montessori Nursery identifies a safeguarding concern, the nursery will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The DSL will coordinate appropriate action and liaise with relevant agencies.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

The nursery will cooperate with statutory agencies and provide relevant information where legally required or where there is another lawful basis for doing so.

16. Review and accountability

The manager is responsible for ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities when working with other agencies.

The nursery will regularly review its information-sharing arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate and compliant with current legal, regulatory and safeguarding requirements.

Any concerns about inappropriate information sharing must be reported to the manager or DSL immediately.

Any suspected personal data breach will be dealt with in accordance with the nursery's data protection and breach procedures.

Legal framework

This policy is based on applicable legislation and statutory requirements, including:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
 - Data Protection Act 2018;
 - Human Rights Act 1998;
 - Children Act 1989;
 - Children Act 2004;
 - applicable Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory requirements;
 - relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.
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Further guidance

- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) – data protection and information-sharing guidance.
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.
- Current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.
- Local safeguarding partnership procedures and guidance.

- Local Authority information-sharing and Early Help guidance.
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Policy review and approval

This policy was adopted by: Impact Montessori Nursery

Date adopted: _____

Date of last review: _____

Date to be reviewed: _____

Signed on behalf of the provider: _____

Name of signatory: _____

Role of signatory: _____