



Confidentiality Policy

At Port Lincoln Children's Centre we protect the privacy and confidentiality of children, family, staff and management. We do this by:

- keeping accurate records and information that are only appropriate to giving quality care;
- storing information in a secure place;
- only allowing access to family, and those at the Centre with the legal right to know and need it to fulfil their responsibilities at the Centre.

We believe:

- Children need: - confidentiality about sensitive health, learning and behaviour issues.
- Families/Guardians need: - security that private information given to the Centre about income levels and custodial arrangements are securely stored and kept confidential;
 - the ability to speak to staff about confidential matters concerning child care;
 - access to their own personal records and the opportunity to up date or change information when it is not current or correct.
- Staff need: - confidentiality about personal records, details and appraisals;
 - clear guidelines re what they should/shouldn't do;
 - freedom to raise personal issues that impact on the workplace.
- Management need: - to make decisions about confidential issues;
 - to obtain relevant details from clients.

Implementation

- The Centre will maintain confidentiality regarding children's information.
- Only share information with other agencies with parental consent. *
- Appropriately display specific information about a child's health e.g., diet, allergies for staff use.
- Staff will not discuss children/families within hearing range of children or other adults.
- All personal information given to the Centre is confidential e.g., financial, custody details.
- Parents are made aware any private information impacting the care of children can be discussed with staff and this will be kept confidential.
- Staff, volunteers and students are aware that confidentiality of all matters concerning the Centre must be maintained at all times.
- Information which is private and confidential but necessary for the care of a child will be given to staff on the expectation of being kept confidential.
- Staff will maintain the privacy and confidentiality of other staff members.
- Information about the functioning and the business of the Centre is private.
- Personal records and appraisals are confidential and accessed only by the Director and the individual staff member.
- All matters discussed at committee meeting will be treated as confidential.
- All staff, volunteers, students and committee members will be made aware of and have access to the confidentiality policy. They will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of employment/placement at the Centre.

- Any confidential discussions will take place in private, away from children, staff and parents.

No member of staff may give information or evidence on matters relating to children and or families to anyone other than the custodial parent/guardian when that information has been obtained in the course of employment.

Exception may apply regarding information about children when subpoenaed to appear before a court of law.

In the case of suspected child abuse staff and volunteers have the right to share information with other appropriate agencies without parental consent when they suspect a child is at risk

- Students; people on work experience; volunteers will not make staff, children or families an object of discussion outside the centre, nor will they at any time use family names in recorded or tutorial information.
- Students will seek parental permission before making observations of children, then only first initial or pseudonyms will be used.

Notwithstanding these requirements confidential information may be exchanged in the normal course of work between staff members at the Centre and may be given to the Governing Council, when it is required for the proper operation of the Centre and the wellbeing of users and staff.

Access to own information

Parents and staff will be given access to any information held about them.

Developmental and programming information about children is available for families.

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National Quality Standards
 QA 7 Governance
 7.1.2 Management systems
 QA 4 Staffing Arrangements
 4.4.4 Professional standards
 National Regulations 181 Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
 183 Storage of records and other documents.

Sources:
 UN Convention on the rights of the Child;
 Article 16
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
 ACEQA
 Education Standards Board
 South Australia Department for Education

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