



INFORMATION SHARING GUIDANCE



Introduction

- The effective sharing of information is essential for keeping children and young people safe and promoting their welfare.
- Data protection law **should not be a barrier** when it is necessary, proportionate, and justified
- Missed opportunities to record and share information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare of children and young people.
- London Safeguarding Children Procedures set out guidance on information sharing in full: [CP9. Information Sharing Guidance \(londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk\)](http://londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk)
- See also "Myth busting guide to information sharing" in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

In what circumstances can information be shared?

- Information can be shared to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as set out in [Working Together 2018](#) (the statutory guidance for all organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children).

"Practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks of concerns about the safety and welfare of children."

- Sharing information early helps to ensure that a child or young person receives the right services at the right time
- Practitioners should be alert to the need to share important information about any adults a child or young person has contact that may impact the child or young person's safety or welfare.

The legal basis



The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) introduced in the Data Protection Act 2018. You must have a legal basis for sharing information – most relevant for safeguarding are:

1. **Legal Obligation** - Article 6(1) (*for example, under the Children Act 1989 and Section 11 of the Children Act 2004*)
2. **Public Task** – Article (6)(1)(e) (*specific task that is in the public interest, which is laid down by law*)

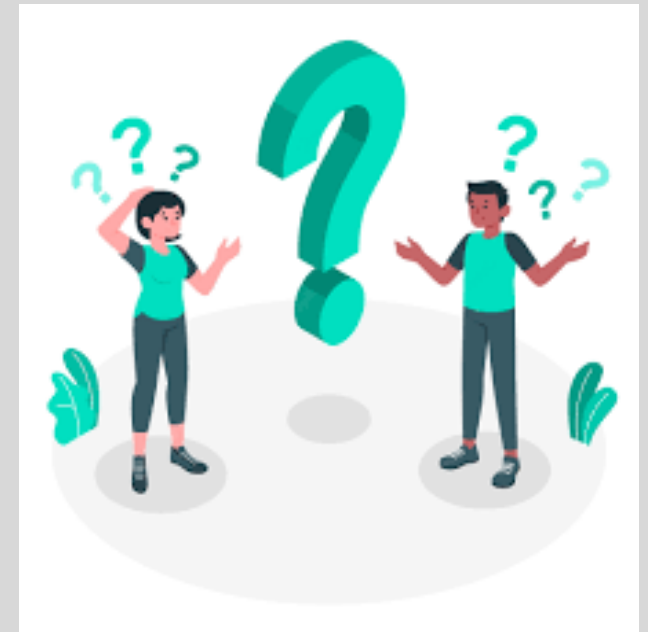
Other Bases (see Section 3.4 of the London Child Safeguarding Procedures on information sharing):

- Vital interest,
- Legitimate interest,
- Contract
- Consent

Who is responsible for sharing information and how?



- **All practitioners, agencies and organisations – must not assume** that someone else will pass the information on.
- **Local Safeguarding Partners** – information sharing in **timely and proportionate** way, with local area and across boundaries.
- Share information **securely and record nature of request**. In an emergency, do not delay, share timely/proportionate data and record after the event.
- If you are concerned about information sharing practice in your local area then **follow the local escalation procedures**.
- Your agency's own procedures will enable information sharing, e.g. [MET Police information request form \(87b\)](#)



Remember the 7 Principles of Information Sharing



Use your judgement – if you are unsure, consult with your manager or information/governance/data protection lead.

Ensure information is:

- ✓ Necessary and proportionate to the circumstances
- ✓ Relevant to the circumstances
- ✓ Adequate and sufficient for its purpose
- ✓ Accurate and up to date
- ✓ Timely, particularly in an emergency
- ✓ Exchanged securely
- ✓ The details of the information shared (or withheld) should be recorded.

The Golden Rules



Remember

- ✓ Welfare of the child always more important than confidentiality
- ✓ Discuss concerns with the child's carer – if it is safe and practicable
- ✓ **You do not need consent to share information**
- ✓ Seek advice promptly if you are unsure
- ✓ Protect identities of people who might suffer harm
- ✓ Only share information with people/organisations that have a role in safeguarding
- ✓ Record your reasons for information sharing
- ✓ Subjects of information sharing have the right to challenge

Re-cap



- **Information Sharing is essential for keeping children and young people safe and promoting their welfare.**
- Data protection law **should not be a barrier** when it is necessary, proportionate, and justified
- As practitioners, agencies and organisations, **you are responsible for sharing information** and must not assume that someone else will pass the information on.
- Remember the **7 principles of information sharing**
- Remember the **Golden Rules** of information sharing
- **Use your judgement** when sharing information - if you are unsure consult with your manager or information governance lead.
- If you have concerns about information sharing practice, **follow the escalation processes in your local area.**



Further Resources

- [London Child Safeguarding Procedures, Chapter 9](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#)
- [The Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\) Website](#)
- [Practice Guidance on Sharing Adult Safeguarding Information](#)
- [Bromley Escalation Procedure](#)

If you have any further questions about the role of information sharing in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, speak to your local safeguarding children partnership [**BSCP@bromley.gov.uk**](mailto:BSCP@bromley.gov.uk)

[**www.bromleysafeguarding.org**](http://www.bromleysafeguarding.org)