



Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility

Brent LSCB

Information Sharing Framework

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This guidance has been devised by the Brent Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). It guides professionals through their role in relation to sharing information.

Brent LSCB expects all professionals and agencies that work with children to fully engage with this guidance.

Any agency/professional that does not fulfil its obligation regarding information sharing will be held to account for their actions by the LSCB.

Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing

The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information

Be open and honest

Seek advice where in doubt

Share with consent where appropriate

(unless sufficient need to over-ride lack of consent)

Information shared should be:
necessary
proportionate
relevant
accurate
timely
secure

Consider a child's safety and wellbeing when making decisions about sharing

Keep a record of your decision including justification for it

2 Sharing Information

- 2.1. In the majority of child protection cases, ineffective or lack of information sharing is a key factor.
- 2.2. Decisions to share information can be as important as the duty to protect confidentiality
- 2.3. **Consent for information sharing:**
 - Should be the first option, unless to do so would increase risk of harm to self or others. (See below)
 - Should be discussed with children and families when they first engage with their service about information being shared Must be informed
 - Can be explicit or implied, **MUST** be explicit if data is sensitive as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998
 - Can be written or verbal, **MUST** be written in the case of explicit consent, to evidence the consent was explicit
 - Must be voluntary and not coerced
 - Must be sought again if things change
 - Can be withdrawn at any time
 - Must be sought using clear accessible language
 - Explain there are times when confidentiality cannot be maintained
 - Must abide with relevant legislation, local policies and protocols
- 2.4. **Sharing information without consent:**
 - For child protection purposes (section 47 investigation, care proceedings)
 - If there is significant threat to life or serious harm to either the individual or others
 - If urgent medical treatment is needed
 - Where potential or actual criminal offences are involved and disclosure of information is required as part of legal or judicial proceedings
 - Where you need to undertake statutory function
- 2.5. This guidance should be considered in all new service developments and partnership initiatives.

3 Points to Remember

3.1. Some points to remember about information sharing are:

- **Never assume that other professionals are taking the action you would expect - check with them directly. .**
- **Get feedback - find out what action another professional will take as a result of the information you have given them, and verify that it has taken place**
- **Check your terminology - as professionals, we all use our own jargon and 'short-hand' - this makes things easier between ourselves, but can confuse people who are not familiar with our language. Make sure that you are clear, especially when working with professionals in other disciplines.**
- **The absolute requirement to share information where there are concerns about significant harm or likelihood of significant harm**
- **Professionals working with children, parents or adults in contact with children, should always share information with children's social care where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. Sharing information under these circumstances is legitimate and in the public interest.**
- **Understand the information sharing relationships, who is the Data Controller and who if any, is the Data Processor, If you are sharing information to a Data Processor, ensure there is a contract in place.**
- **Always share information securely**

4 Key References & Resources

1. **London Child Protection Procedures**
[Part A: Core Procedures](#)
[Part B: Practice Guidance](#)
2. [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
3. [HM Government: Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners and Managers](#)
4. [Department of Education; Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners and Managers – A Pocket Guide](#)
5. [Children Act 1989](#)
6. [Data Protection Act 1998](#)
7. [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
8. [Human Rights Act 1998](#)

A number of local Information Sharing Protocols for specific purposes are published on the LSCB website - [Information Sharing page](#), these include;

- **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub/ Brent Family Front Door Information Sharing Protocol**
- **Community Safety Pathway Multi Agency Plan Information Sharing Protocols**
- **Youth Offending Information Sharing Protocols**