



Lakeside @ Our Place

Confidentiality Policy

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1. Policy Statement

The aim is to provide clear guidance for all site staff and other agencies in working with confidential information.

The importance of confidentiality cannot be over-emphasised.

Information about young people, members of staff and Lakeside, whether written or verbal is highly confidential and must be treated as such. Confidentiality, also, refers to documents in transit such as post, computerised information, fax transmissions, e-mails and information on discs/cd rom.

Breaching Confidentiality is a disciplinary matter that could result in dismissal.

2. Young People

Confidential information is everything relating to a young person.

For example: their name, address, personal information etc.

Knowledge that all site staff acquire regarding a young person's personal life and relationships during the course of their employment is to be treated as confidential.

Site staff must ensure that confidentiality is not breached by, for example, conversations about young people being overheard in inappropriate places, both on and off site; files being left unattended or careless computer security.

Information about young people should not be disclosed to any person who is not directly concerned with their service provision unless the young person or if appropriate their parent or guardian and the placing Authority has given permission.

When the disclosure of information is required in telephone conversations, staff must be satisfied that the person to whom they are speaking is identifiable and is allowed to gain the information and has a right to know.

If staff are not 100% sure they can have the requested information they must seek permission from the Registered Manager.

When recording any information about a young person in writing, the information should be factual and relevant. Staff must always consider who is likely to read this information.

Information received from other professionals about a young person is confidential and should be marked as such. Information in this form should not be given to any other person unless prior consent to share with a wider staff team on a need to know basis is obtained from the author.

At the close of each working day all desks, in all offices, must be cleared of all confidential material and this information should be locked away. Offices should be locked wherever possible once work has ceased for the day.

Documents for disposal must be shredded if they contain confidential information.

Each office has its own shredder.

3. Disclosure to the Police

Any court order or warrant authorising or requiring disclosure to the Police must be obeyed. Otherwise, personal information should not be disclosed unless, by doing so, it may prevent, detect or prosecute a serious crime. If this is the case the must be referred to a member of the Senior Management Team who will make sure the following conditions are met:

- The crime must be serious enough for disclosure in the public interest to outweigh the confidentiality of a young person's personal information.
- Failure to disclose the information would result in the prevention of detection, or prosecution of a serious crime.
- The information must be requested by a Police Officer of a suitably high rank i.e. superintendent or above, who must provide an undertaking that the information will only be used for the agreed purpose and will be destroyed if there is no subsequent prosecution or conviction.
- A written record of the date and nature of the information disclosed must be kept.

4. Data Protection

Lakeside @ Our Place must comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act, 1998, and will ensure that personal data is obtained and processed properly and lawfully. Information will be held and used only for specified purposes and must be accurate and current. Personal data relating to staff is held for no longer than necessary by law and is accessible to the individual concerned where a valid request is received.

Information held will be protected against unauthorised access and must not be transferred to any other locations which do not provide adequate protection for data.

5. Personal Information

This refers to any data relating to an individual employee. The information may be recorded on a computerised system or on written, 'hard copy' documents and may include informal notes. Personal data may, also, include opinions and intentions relating to the individual. This may include photographs.

Lakeside may hold and process information which is of a sensitive nature, such as information about race, culture and health - namely health related questionnaires used in recruitment, information sought from an employee's General Practitioner, Equal Opportunities monitoring forms and other information regarding employment in the U. K. Our Place will only hold information, which is deemed necessary.

6. Disclosures

Lakeside @ Our Place aims to ensure that no personal data is revealed inappropriately. Internal information sharing must be on a strict 'need to know' basis where the information is needed by the person receiving it to perform their role.

Information should not be released concerning present or former employees without their consent with the exception of confidential references.

7. Access to Information

Staff have the right to the following:

- To be told whether personal information about them is being processed.
- To be given details of the data and the purpose for which the data is being processed. Also, details of the recipients to which the information might be disclosed.
- To have access to the data for valid purposes.