

## Information Sharing Overview

**This should be read in conjunction with the information sharing protocol.**

When speaking to a child or an adult in circumstances where there are concerns about Significant Harm to a Child or an Adult, full confidentiality cannot be promised as it may be necessary to share the information to protect others as well as the person subject to the concerns.

It is important that it is explained to children, families and other adults, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their understanding and, if necessary or appropriate, their consent.

For example, information may be needed for a Child Protection Enquiry by Children's Social Care Services, and/or for a criminal investigation by the Police or for an adult investigation by Adult Social Care Services and/or in some circumstances it may be needed for action in the Courts or other legal proceedings or for insurance reasons.

Any queries about information sharing must be directed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

**The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will record in the case file, full details of all decisions regarding information sharing, including the rationale.**

The General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 sets out clearly how personal information should be managed. HM Government provides guidance about information sharing (see [Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018](#)).

The general principle is that information will only be shared with the consent of the subject of the information.

The exceptions to this include where to seek consent would:

- Place the child or others at increased risk of Significant Harm, or
- Place an adult at significant risk of serious harm, or
- Undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime (i.e. any crime which causes or is likely to cause Significant Harm to a child or serious harm to an adult or which involves dishonesty, unfitness or incompetence, or other seriously improper conduct), or
- Undermine the ability to seek legal advice or enable others to seek legal advice or conduct legal or other regulatory proceedings.

This may be the case where making a referral to Children's Social Care Services, Adult Social Care Services or the Police.

The safety and welfare of a child or an adult must be the primary consideration when making decisions on whether to share information about the child or adult. Where there is concern that the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration. Similarly, where there are concerns about the safety of an adult, their welfare takes precedence and information must be shared where a crime is suspected.

Where information is shared, those doing so must ensure it is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which they are sharing it, minimised, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.

- Before sharing information, the following questions should be considered: Does the person need to know the information?
- Does the person need to know **all** the information?
- For what purpose does the person need to know the information?

For a detailed explanation of how, what, why and when information may be shared please review the **Information Sharing Protocol**.