



Home-Start Network Confidentiality Policy



We
inspire
growth

We
prioritise
kindness

We
achieve
together

Confidentiality

Home-Start _____ recognises that the legitimate use of information underpins our service.

Document Title	Confidentiality Policy (Mandatory)
Distribution	For use by Home-Starts UK wide
Policy Owner	Assistant Director of Quality and Impact
Ratified	May 2023
Review Frequency	Every two years or following significant changes in legislation
Source Directorate/Department	Network Impact

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Confidentiality Policy

There are no significant changes to this policy

Section	From	To	Date	Reason	By

POLICY APPROVED BY	
Name:	
Signed (Chair):	
Date:	
Review Date:	

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Confidentiality Principles

- Those who share sensitive personal information with Home-Start have a right to expect that it will be treated as confidential
- Personal and confidential information in any form obtained by Home-Start will be handled in compliance with data protection law and only in the ways relevant to the purpose of providing support as set out in our Privacy Notice
- Access to the information we hold is limited to those who have a genuine need to see and use it in order to fulfil their roles in delivering our service
- Everyone who works for or with Home-Start understands their duty to maintain the confidentiality and relevance of information that is shared with or by them and the consequences of breaching that confidentiality

1.2 Responsibility for the Principles in Practice

For Trustees that means:

- being fully committing to the principles of confidentiality and the management and security of information they receive in the course of their duties
- being responsible for ensuring that everyone in Home-Start understands and is committed to maintaining confidentiality
- ensuring that dated and signed records are kept of where access to sensitive information is required along with the reasons for that access
- ensuring that procedures are in place that mean that the information collected is only what is needed to deliver the service, that it is kept securely in whichever form it takes and is only available to those who need to know (see Data Protection policy)
- ensuring that procedures are in place for sharing information securely and in line with the Privacy Notice
- being responsible for dealing with any breach of confidentiality including, if necessary, ending an individual's association with Home-Start, reporting breaches to the relevant authority and Home-Start UK, and cooperating with any investigation/ prosecution.

For Staff that means:

- following the principles set out in the policy and the associated Privacy Notice in all their work
- maintaining the confidentiality and security of all their records in line with our Data Protection policy
- ensuring that information they hold about others and information they provide about themselves is accurate, up to date and only what is needed to provide the service
- recognising that everyone involved with Home-Start has a right to confidentiality
- following the systems and procedures to maintain confidentiality including when sharing with other agencies
- knowing that where there are concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or vulnerable adult, the families, or individual members within the family, need not be informed that their information is being passed on to the relevant authorities if telling them has the potential to cause further harm, or may jeopardise any investigation by Police, Social Care services or other agencies with legal investigatory powers
- knowing and following the procedures for dealing with a request for information from the police, courts or other agencies with legal powers to collect information
- being aware that breaches of confidentiality are serious matters and could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal or potential prosecution.

For Volunteers that means:

- making sure they understand and follow the principles of confidentiality and understand the limits around what information is collected and shared (set out in the Privacy Notice and Data Protection policy) and follow the procedures put in place by Home-Start to maintain that confidentiality
- being careful not to discuss families they support in ways that would identify them to others, making sure that any information they record about their families is held securely and is destroyed as soon as support is ended in line with our Data Protection policy
- knowing that breaches of confidentiality are serious and could result in ending their volunteering role and could make them liable to prosecution.

For Families that means:

- knowing how and why Home-Start will collect information from and about them and in what circumstances it could be shared (set out in the Privacy Notice)

- having confidence that Home-Start will respect their right to confidentiality and will let them know wherever possible before sharing information about them
- being aware that if Home-Start believes that telling them that we will share their information might put them or a child at risk of harm we will not tell them first
- knowing that Home-Start will keep accurate and up to date records and that there are clear limits to how long information is kept in an identifiable form as per our Data Protection policy.

Below is a list of policies that are also relevant to confidentiality. You may find it helpful to refer to any of these additional documents when reading and using this policy.

- [GDPR/Data Protection](#)
- [Reporting Serious Incidents and reputational threats to HSUK](#)

Other sources of advice or guidance on issues relating to GDPR/Data Protection/Confidentiality can be obtained from the Information Commissioners Office <https://ico.org.uk/>