

Blue Windmill Nursery

Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy

Blue Windmill Childcare Ltd recognises the importance of protecting confidential information relating to children, families, staff and visitors.

We are committed to handling personal information lawfully, fairly, securely and sensitively in accordance with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements
- Relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance

This policy applies to all staff, students, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the nursery.

Confidentiality

During the course of their work, staff may have access to confidential and sensitive information relating to children, families, staff and nursery operations.

All information must be treated respectfully and shared only where necessary and appropriate.

We will maintain confidentiality by:

- Ensuring information is only shared on a need-to-know basis
- Respecting the privacy of children and families
- Storing records securely
- Ensuring confidential discussions cannot be overheard
- Using information only for legitimate nursery purposes
- Following safeguarding and legal information-sharing requirements

Parents and carers may access records relating to their own child but will not have access to information relating to other children.

Staff Conduct and Responsibilities

All staff, students and volunteers are expected to:

- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Follow nursery policies and procedures
- Handle information securely and professionally
- Avoid discussing children, families or staff outside of professional contexts
- Avoid discussing confidential matters in public areas or on social media
- Report any concerns relating to confidentiality or data breaches immediately

Confidential information must not be shared with friends, family members or unauthorised persons.

Breaches of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, dismissal.

Data Protection

The nursery collects and processes personal information in order to:

- Safeguard and support children
- Deliver early education and childcare
- Maintain accurate records
- Meet legal and regulatory requirements
- Support children's learning and development
- Communicate with parents and carers
- Manage staffing and employment matters
- Claim government funding

Information will only be collected where necessary and will be processed lawfully.

Storage of Information

Paper records containing confidential information are stored securely.

Electronic information is stored using secure password-protected systems and devices.

The nursery uses systems including:

- Ovivio nursery management software
- Box cloud storage
- Nursery email systems
- Nursery tablets and devices used for operational purposes

Access to records is restricted to authorised persons only.

Nursery tablets and devices are stored securely when not in use.

Information Sharing

Information will only be shared where:

- Parents or carers have given consent
- There is a legitimate professional reason
- It is required by law
- Safeguarding concerns make information sharing necessary

Information may be shared with:

- Ofsted
- Local authorities
- Schools
- Health professionals
- Safeguarding agencies
- Other relevant professionals supporting the child

The nursery recognises that data protection law does not prevent appropriate information sharing for safeguarding purposes.

Safeguarding

The welfare and safety of the child is always the nursery's paramount concern.

Where there are concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, confidentiality may be overridden in accordance with safeguarding legislation and the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and access will be limited to those who need the information in order to protect the child.

Use of Electronic Communication

Staff communication systems, including internal closed WhatsApp groups and internal closed Facebook Messenger groups, must only be used for legitimate nursery business.

Staff must:

Maintain professionalism within all nursery communication groups

Avoid sharing confidential information unnecessarily

Follow nursery expectations regarding confidentiality and conduct

Ensure information is not shared outside authorised groups

Photographs, Videos and Electronic Devices

The use of photographs, videos, tablets and electronic devices is managed in accordance with the nursery's Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use Policy

Retention and Disposal of Records

Records will only be retained for as long as necessary in line with legal, safeguarding, operational and regulatory requirements.

When records are no longer required, they will be securely destroyed or deleted.

Data Breaches

Any actual or suspected data breach must be reported immediately to the Nursery Manager.

The nursery will investigate breaches promptly and take appropriate action in line with data protection requirements.

Training and Awareness

All staff, students and volunteers will receive guidance appropriate to their role regarding:

- Confidentiality
- Data protection
- Safeguarding information sharing
- Secure handling of information

Confidentiality and data protection expectations form part of staff induction and ongoing professional responsibilities.