

Confidentiality Policy

Preston Child Contact Centre

The Preston Child Contact Centre recognise that the contact process requires explicit confidentiality which all Child Contact Centre workers are obliged to observe. Therefore, we will ensure that:

1. Volunteers undertake not to discuss or disclose any details relating to a family outside of the Child Contact Centre.
2. Volunteers do not make verbal or written reports in any family proceedings.
3. The dates and times of a family's attendance will be made available to referring agencies upon request. No other information will be released unless a) a child is felt to be at risk of harm either inside or outside of the Child Contact Centre or b) anyone using the Child Contact Centre or a volunteer is at risk from physical violence.
4. A parent's details such as his/her address and telephone number will not be passed to any other person (including their former partner) or agency without their permission.
5. The only exceptions to this will be if a) a child is felt to be at risk of harm or b) anyone using the Child Contact Centre or a volunteer is at risk of physical violence.
6. Unless there is an agreement which allows them to do otherwise, Solicitors, CAFCASS Officers, Social Workers or any other individual or agency will not be allowed to carry out family assessments on Child Contact Centre premises.
7. All potential volunteers must have a Criminal Records check carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau. The results of this check will be made available to the Co-ordinator and/or the Chair of the Management Committee.
8. All information relating to families and volunteers will be kept in a secure place at all times.
9. All information relating to families and volunteers which has not been used for three years will be treated as confidential waste and disposed of as such.
10. Child Contact Centre users, referrers, volunteers and staff will all be aware of the existence of this policy and have access to it upon request.
11. This policy will be reviewed and if necessary updated annually.

The centre is not required to notify the Data Protection Commission, however irrespective of whether the Child Contact Centre needs to "notify" the Commissioner it must abide by these principles relating to Data Protection:

1. Data must be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.
2. Data must be held for lawful purposes.
3. Data must be adequate, relevant and not excessive.
4. Data should be accurate and kept up to date.
5. Data should not be kept longer than is necessary.
6. Data should be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
7. Data must be kept secure.
8. Data must not be transferred outside the European Economic Area unless exemptions are met.

People are entitled to know what data a Child Contact Centre holds about them, although there is an exemption which allows for non-disclosure of sensitive data if the Child Contact Centre holds it for the purposes of preventing the occurrence of crime due to violence.