



Sefton Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) Confidentiality Policy

Approved by: SPCF Steering Group

Approved on: May 2024

Next review due on: May 2025

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to promote trust in SPCF and the service we offer to parent carers. The guiding principle is that information about a parent carer belongs to that carer and we need to have their permission to pass any of it on. We believe parent carers have a right to a service which respects their need for privacy and for control over information about themselves and their caring situation. All workers, volunteers, trustees and Steering Group members will abide by this policy in dealing with all information given to us by parent carers, whether through groups and activities, or other personal or telephone contact. We will consider any breach of this policy, except in certain exceptional circumstances outlined below, as a disciplinary matter.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

1. The Forum offers a confidential service to parent carers.
2. This means that information given by parent carers to Forum workers or volunteers will not be passed on to anyone outside of the Forum without their permission, except in exceptional circumstances. Information means anything the parent carer tells us about themselves and their caring situation. This includes the fact that they have been in contact with the Forum.
3. We will record only the minimum of information we need in order to offer continuity to parent carers. Any records we keep concerning a parent carer will be made available to them on request. We will record information about parent carers in ways which are accurate, respectful and which we would be happy to let them read.
4. People using the Forum have the right to remain anonymous if they choose.
5. Any records will be kept safely and securely, and in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act (see separate policy).
6. We collect anonymous statistical information, to allow us to plan and improve our services. We may share this with other agencies who provide or fund services to parent carers.

7. Safeguarding issues will always override the need for confidentiality. We reserve the right to breach confidentiality when sharing information is vital to child and/or parent carer protection (see SPCF Safeguarding and Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy). Examples of circumstances in which confidentiality would be breached could include:

- a) If we have reason to believe that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult is experiencing abuse, whether physical, sexual, emotional or financial.
- b) If we believe a parent carer to be in a life-threatening situation.
- c) If a parent carer tells us that they intend to leave the person they are caring for unattended for a period of time, which we believe would cause them harm or endanger their life.

8. The decision to break confidentiality rests with the designated safeguarding lead for SPCF. The deputy safeguarding lead will be informed at once of this decision to breach confidentiality.

9. Where possible, we will let the person know that we intend to breach confidentiality.