

## Debutots Confidentiality Policy

### Aim

To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the organisation which is understood by children, parents/carers and staff.

### Rationale

Debutots seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to implement the underlying principles of the “Every Child Matters Agenda”, in line with current child protection and safeguarding guidelines and to address the issues, which may arise about confidentiality. It is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child’s voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received. Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust. The organisation is mindful that all stakeholders place it in a position of trust and there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality.

### Objectives:

- To provide a consistent message in the organisation about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the organisation, where children and all staff feel safe to confide and share problems.
- To ensure that staff, parents, and children are aware of the organisation’s confidentiality, policy, and procedures.
- To reassure children that their ‘best interests’ will be maintained.
- To ensure that children and parents/carers know that organisation staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed, working with the guidelines set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole organisation issue and that in classes ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To ensure that parents have a right of access to any records the organisation may hold on their child but not to any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for.

## Guidelines

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
- All social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place, which cannot be accessed by individuals other than organisation staff.
- The organisation continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
  - a) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents.
  - b) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
  - c) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
  - d) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the organisation cannot guarantee total confidentiality in all cases; for example, issues involving child protection or criminal issues. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that only in exceptional circumstances will confidentiality be broken.
- The organisation prides itself on good communication with parents, carers and children.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns, and special educational needs.
- Confidentiality is a whole organisation issue. The whole organisation needs to be proactive, so children feel supported, but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known it should not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.
- Staff should be aware of children with medical needs when necessary and the drop off information sheet should be accessible to staff who need that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
- Photographs of children should not be used outside of the organisation premises without parents/carers permission. *At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified.*
- Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child.
- All personal information about children including medical and social services records should be regarded as confidential. Any personal data will only be kept as long as necessary or for the length of time as stipulated by law.
- Staff laptops are password protected and backed up securely.
- Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving organisation.



## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

1. The policy will be reviewed and evaluated as part of the organisation's monitoring cycle.