**CONFIDENTIALITY AND CLIENT ACCESS TO RECORDS POLICY.**

At Cowling Preschool, staff and managers have a ‘confidential relationship’ with families. It is our intention to respect the privacy of all our children and their parents and carers.

**Policy Statement.**

We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of our children. There are record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements; means of storing and sharing that information takes place within the framework of GDPR May 2018 and the Human Rights Act.

**Procedures.**

* We always check whether parents regard the information they share with us to be regarded as confidential or not.
* Some parents sometimes share information about themselves with other parents as well as staff; the preschool cannot be held responsible if information is shared beyond those parents whom the person has ‘confided’ in.
* Information shared between parents in a discussion or training group is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not discussed outside of it.
* We inform the parents when we need to record confidential information beyond the general personal information we keep, (see our record keeping procedures) – for example with regard to any injuries, concerns or changes in relation to the child or the family, any discussions with parents on sensitive matters, any records we are obliged to keep regarding action taken in respect of child protection and any contact and correspondence with external agencies in relation to the child.
* We keep all records securely (see our record keeping procedures) in line with GDPR May 2018.
* Parents will not have access to information about any child other than their own.
* Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for the purposes of the curriculum planning, group management and committee SENCo, with people other than the parents/carers of the child.
* Issues to do with employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
* Any anxieties/evidence relating to child protection issues will be kept in a confidential file and shared only on a ‘need to know’ basis in accordance with North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board guidance.
* Students on training placements at the setting will be advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

**Client access to records procedures.**

Parents may request access to any confidential records held on their child and family following the procedure below:

* Any request to see the child’s personnel file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made to the Manager.
* The preschool commits to providing access within 14 days, although this may be extended.
* The file will be photocopied and adjusted as necessary if third parties refuse consent to disclose.
* ‘Third parties’ include all family members who may be referred to in the records. It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go direct to them. Where consent is not given, this information will be removed from the photocopied file available to the parents.
* The parents will be invited in to discuss the contents with the manager, so it can be explained.
* Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the preschool or another third party agency.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the preschool, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please also see our other policies on child protection.

**This policy was adopted on .………………………………….......**

**Date to be reviewed ...…………………………………….**

**Signed on behalf of the management committee …………………………………………**

**Name of signatory …………………………………………**

**Role of signatory (e.g. Chair/owner) …………………………………………**