



SUPPORTIVE PARENTS HANDBOOK

Providing the Parent Partnership Service for Bristol North Somerset & South Gloucestershire

11. CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1. Confidentiality Statement

Supportive Parents is committed to providing a confidential information and support service to its users. Supportive Parents believes that principles of confidentiality must be integrated across all aspects of services and management. Supportive Parents believes its users deserve the right to confidentiality to protect their interests and safeguard the Organisation's services. The following will be displayed in the Supportive Parents' Office base:

Supportive Parents offers a confidential service subject to the requirement of local Child Protection procedures. Nothing you tell us will be shared with any other organisation or individual without your express permission, unless, in the opinion of the Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator, Child Protection considerations apply.

2. Definition of Confidentiality

Supportive Parents understands confidentiality to mean that no information regarding a service user shall be given directly or indirectly to anyone outside the Organisation, without that service user's prior expressed consent to disclose such information.

Supportive Parents recognises that all users should be able to access the Organisation's services in confidence and that no person outside the organisation should ever know that they have used the Organisation's services, except where Child Protection is a concern.

Supportive Parents recognises that information may be indirectly given out through staff informally discussing cases. All staff should ensure that no discussions relating to an individual user take place where they can be overheard by a third party. The Board of Trustees will not receive identifying details of individual users, or their case.



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Supportive Parents will not confirm the user's presence in the office base or use of the Organisation's services without obtaining the user's consent.

Supportive Parents is a voluntary organisation working in partnership with local education authorities and is required to follow local Child Protection procedures when abuse is brought to attention.

3. Statistical Recording

Supportive Parents is committed to effective statistical recording of service users to enable the organisation to monitor take-up of service and to identify any policy issues arising from advice services.

It is the Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator's responsibility to ensure all statistical records given to third parties, such as to support funding applications, monitoring reports for the local authority shall be produced in anonymous form, so individuals cannot be recognised.

4. Case records

It is the Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator's responsibility to ensure all case records are kept securely. This includes notebooks, copies of correspondence, calculation sheets and any other sources of information. All staff/volunteers are given guidance on the safe storage of information relating to service users.

5. Expressed consent to give information

It is the responsibility of staff/volunteers to ensure that where any action is agreed to be taken by the Organisation on behalf of a client, that client must firstly give their consent which should be recorded in the Case record.

Supportive Parent staff/volunteers are responsible for checking with clients if it is acceptable to call them at home or work in relation to their case. All staff/volunteers must ensure they make no reference to Supportive Parents when making telephone contact with clients unless the client has agreed to this.

Supportive Parents' staff/volunteers are responsible for checking with clients that it is acceptable to write to them at home or work in relation to their case.

All details of expressed consent must be recorded in the case record.



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6. Child Protection – exclusion from confidentiality

Where the safety and welfare of children are at risk, their protection takes precedence over the requirement for confidentiality.

On occasions where a member of staff/volunteer feels that Child Protection may be an issue, the following steps must be taken:

- a. The member of staff/volunteer should make notes of any events/ discussions causing concern as soon as possible.
- b.. The member of staff/volunteer should raise the matter immediately with the Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator.
- c. The member of staff/volunteer must discuss with the Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator the issues involved in the case. The Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator should take a written note of this discussion.
- d. The Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator is responsible for making a decision whether or not to contact Social Services about the matter. Once contact is made with Social Services, the Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator will take whatever action is advised by this agency.
- e. The Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator should brief the Chair/Vice Chair on the full facts of the case, ensuring they do not breach confidentiality in doing so.
- f. A full written report on the case should be made and any action agreed, undertaken. The Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring all activities are actioned.
- g. If the Strategic Development and Management Co-ordinator is not available, any Child Protection concern should be passed to nominated members of the Board of Trustees who will decide whether Social Services should be contacted.
- h. The case should not be discussed with other members of the Board who may have to resolve any future complaint about the action taken.



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7. **Legislative Framework**

Supportive Parents will monitor this policy to ensure it meets statutory and legal requirements, including the Data Protection Act, Children's Act, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and Prevention of Terrorism Act. Training on the policy will include these aspects.

8. **Ensuring the effectiveness of the policy**

All Board of Trustee members will receive a copy of the Confidentiality Policy. Existing and new members of staff and volunteers will be introduced to the Confidentiality Policy via induction and training. The Policy will be reviewed annually and amendments should be proposed and agreed by the Board.

Reviewed and Agreed 16th July 2007