

Shadwell Childcare

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Adopted in November 2024

Date to be reviewed: September 2025

Trustee:

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Safeguarding Children - Policy and Procedures

Shadwell Childcare will ensure that all members of staff, students or volunteers are given training to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm, as described in the Children Act 1989 and *Working together to safeguard children* (DfE 2024).

There may be times when a referral to Leeds Children's Social Work Service (CSWS) may be the first point of reference. Advice can also be sought from the Local Authority on 0113 3760336.

It is imperative that adults are equipped with the knowledge and awareness that will enable them to detect any abuse or ill treatment of children. This policy document therefore aims to be a reference for all members of staff, visiting professionals and volunteers.

In implementing the safeguarding policy Shadwell Childcare will;

- Ensure that the staff understand their legal and moral responsibilities to protect children from harm or abuse
- Ensure that all workers are aware of Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
- Ensure that workers understand their duty to report any concerns that arise about a child to the named person for safeguarding without delay
- Ensure that workers understand their duty to report any adult's conduct towards a child to the manager immediately
- Ensure that the named person understands their responsibility to refer any safeguarding concerns to the statutory child protection agencies, where those concerns meet the threshold for referral
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner

Training

We comply with the multi-agency procedures published by Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership. We intend to create in Shadwell Childcare an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any misconduct or abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to achieve this:

We will seek out training opportunities for all staff and regular volunteers to ensure that they recognise signs and indicators of abuse which could include physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. At induction, all staff complete the Leeds SCP course 'Working together to safeguard children' which provides specific information regarding the local context and multi-agency arrangements. In addition, all staff are expected to read ['What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'](#) (DfE 2015).

All staff will have formal training at least every two years, with annual refresher training. We have a blended approach to training, with a mixture of face to face training delivered by the Leeds Education safeguarding team or an external consultant, Leeds SCP modules and other e-learning such as Prevent, domestic abuse, early help, etc.

Safeguarding training will be relevant to children aged 2 – 5 years and will, as a minimum, include:

- What is meant by the term safeguarding.
- The main categories of abuse, harm and neglect.
- The factors, situation and actions that could lead or contribute to abuse, harm or neglect.
- How to work in ways that safeguard children from abuse, harm and neglect.

- How to identify signs of possible abuse, harm and neglect at the earliest opportunity. These may include:
 - Significant changes in children's behaviour.
 - A decline in children's general well-being.
 - Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
 - Concerning comments or behaviour from children.
- Inappropriate behaviour from practitioners or any other person working with the children. This could include inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond what is required through their role; or inappropriate sharing of images.
- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a child may experience emotional abuse or physical abuse because of witnessing domestic abuse or coercive control or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation.
- How to respond, record and effectively refer concerns or allegations related to safeguarding in a timely and appropriate way.
- The setting's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Legislation, national policies, codes of conduct and professional practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Whistleblowing.
- Roles and responsibilities of staff and other relevant professionals involved in safeguarding.

The DSL and deputy/ies will attend training relevant to their additional responsibilities, in line with Leeds SCP multi-agency training standards. Shadwell Childcare takes a blended approach to this training, including Leeds SCP DSL training courses, Safer Recruitment Consortium, and other topic-specific conferences, modules and e-learning opportunities. The DSL and deputy/ies will be trained in:

- How to build a safer organisational culture.
- How to ensure safer recruitment.
- How to develop and implement safeguarding policies and procedures.
- How to support staff and work with other professionals to safeguard children.
- Local child protection procedures and how to liaise with local statutory children's services agencies and with the local safeguarding partners to safeguard children.
- How to refer and escalate concerns.
- How to manage and monitor allegations of abuse against other staff.
- How to ensure internet safety.

Safer recruitment

- It will be made clear to applicants for posts within Shadwell Childcare that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (allowing for changes as a result of the exceptions orders 2013, 2020 and 2023)
- All applicants for work within Shadwell Childcare, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide two references. Staff will not be permitted to commence in post before satisfactory references have been received.
- Referees will be asked to confirm the reason the individual left their employment, and whether there has been any founded safeguarding allegation against them. All references will be followed up and we will ensure that electronic references have come from a legitimate source.
- In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history, or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.

- All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to an enhanced DBS certificate and a probationary period. Positions will not be confirmed unless Shadwell Childcare is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.
- Paid staff and any volunteers who are in regulated activity will be checked against the DBS children's barred list before they commence in post. Newly appointed staff, trustees and other regular volunteers will also be asked to register with the DBS update service and to maintain this registration for the duration of their employment with us.
- Adults, paid or unpaid, who are providing early years or later years childcare will be asked to confirm that they are not disqualified from childcare. All staff will be reminded annually of the Regulations and their duty to inform the employer if they believe they may be disqualified.
- We have a clear expectation that staff will inform the manager or chair of trustees of any relevant change in their circumstances, including any cautions, convictions or criminal charges brought during their employment or where their relationships and associations both within and outside of the workplace (including online) may have implications for the safeguarding of children in Shadwell Childcare (Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 [Regulations August 2018]).

Preventing abuse by means of good practice

Adults will not routinely be left alone with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside - for example for one:one or for behaviour support, will always be within view or hearing of other practitioners.

Adults who have not been checked against the DBS children's barred list (volunteers or visiting professionals) will never take children unaccompanied to the toilet or be involved in nappy changing / intimate care.

Staff are trained in intimate / personal care best practice at least every three years and are aware of the importance of ensuring that children's privacy is considered and balanced with safeguarding and support needs when changing nappies and toileting.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches. Children will learn about safe and unsafe touch, and staff will model safe touch and consent at all times.

The layout of the play area(s) will permit constant supervision of all children.

Staff & any other adults' mobile phones are to be kept locked away whilst working/present in the room. The use of smart watches or other devices with camera capability is not permitted. The only cameras used are the property of Shadwell Childcare; images are kept on password protected computers and tablets and are only printed on site. Photographs are deleted at the end of each half term period.

Staff are made aware of the consequences of inappropriate social networking. No contact via social media should be made to children (or their parents / carers) with whom staff/volunteers have worked in a professional capacity.

The children are not allowed to bring mobile phones, DS game consoles or any hand-held game that may have a camera into the room; any such items brought in will be stored in the office until the child is collected.

Shadwell Childcare will ensure that any allegations made / concerns raised against a member of staff (including agency staff and volunteers) will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures. If an allegation / concern in any way implicates the manager, the Chair of trustees should be informed without delay.

Where an allegation / concern is made against a member of staff (including agency staff and volunteers), the manager (or the Chair of trustees if the concern relates to the manager) will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who is based within the Leeds City Council Child Protection Unit 0113 247 8652/1).

If relevant, the worker with the concern should ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation / concern is made.

A full written record should be made by the witness(es) – there must be no attempt to investigate the incident or concern until the LADO has been consulted

Once the advice of the LADO has been sought and any external processes completed, Shadwell Childcare will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the need for disciplinary procedures. This may involve suspension and/or dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident. If the concern relates to an agency worker, Shadwell Childcare will lead any investigation unless the LADO directs otherwise.

Where it is alleged that a child has been harmed by a member of staff or volunteer, Ofsted must be informed as soon as is practicable after the LADO has been consulted:

The Duty Officer
OFSTED North West
Piccadilly Gate
Manchester, M1 2WD
Tel 0300 1231231

Where relevant, a notification will also be made to the Charities Commission in line with their serious incident reporting procedures.

All staff are encouraged to report low level concerns to the manager, including self-reporting. Where a concern raised about a member of staff does not meet the threshold for LADO referral, the manager will record the concern in a confidential record and decide whether any other action might be needed; for example, additional training, advice / support for the member of staff, review of relevant policies.

Whistleblowing

Working together to safeguard children (DfE 2023) requires all children's settings to put appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place for staff to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in the setting's safeguarding provision. This must include when and how to report concerns and the process that will be followed after staff report concerns. All staff at Shadwell Childcare are made aware of our whistleblowing procedure and all staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the manager or a trustee, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other channels are open to them:

- Leeds LADO – LCC Child Protection Unit 0113 247 8652/1

- NSPCC whistleblowing advice line: call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk. Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH
- Ofsted provides guidance on how to make complaints about a childcare provider: [Complaints procedure - childcare](#)
- General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Whistleblowing for employees](#)

Responding appropriately to concerns of abuse

The first concern will be the child. Children whose condition or behaviour has given cause for concern will be listened to, reassured and helped to understand that they themselves are valued and respected and have not been at fault.

Changes in children's behaviour / appearance / signs of abuse or neglect will always be recorded and responded to.

Shadwell Childcare has a designated person for safeguarding. In their absence; a deputy/senior will always be available for workers to consult with. The named persons for Shadwell Childcare are;

Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) – Paula Wilson

Deputy safeguarding officer (DSO) – Lucy Butterfield

Work telephone number – 01132 659050

Mobile number – 07510 567171

Named safeguarding trustee / Chair of trustees – Carolyn Eyre 07956 210120

One of the designated staff will always be available during working hours, including by phone, even if the nursery (or a bubble) has been closed or the relevant staff need to self-isolate. If neither safeguarding person is contactable, staff should contact the named safeguarding trustee for advice or may refer their concerns to Leeds children's social work service directly.

The responsibilities of the DSL are;

- To ensure staff and volunteers are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child is being abused or neglected
- Ensure staff and volunteers have a clear procedure for reporting their concerns or observations and passing these records to the named person without delay
- Provide support to staff who have concerns about a child
- Ensure that any concerns are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where appropriate and followed up
- To keep secure records of any safeguarding or child protection concerns or incidents including what action was taken. These records will be kept confidential in a secure place

If there are any concerns regarding a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance staff will initially talk to the child, listening carefully to their responses, and notify the designated safeguarding lead. All information should then be recorded, without delay, on a cause for concern form, signed and dated.

Parents will normally be the first point of reference, but if they are not in a position to allay any legitimate anxieties, the matter will be referred to Children's Social Work Services (CSWS). If necessary, CSWS will be contacted without prior consultation with parents, in line with Leeds LSCP procedures.

All such concerns will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The people most commonly involved will be the member of staff / key person, Shadwell Childcare manager (DSL) and the deputy safeguarding officer and, in some circumstances, the Chair of trustees.

The DSL (and their deputy) can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through Leeds Children's Social Work Services screening team or from the NSPCC National Child Protection helpline on 0808 800 5000

An early help assessment may need to be completed in some circumstances; this is usually a multi-agency process that enables all professionals to work together with the family to meet the needs of individual children.

Keeping records

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific and confidential record will be set up using a cause for concern form, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations, describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance, without comment or interpretation. Where possible, record the exact words spoken by the child. A body map may be used to record any marks or injuries. The record must include the date, name and signature of the recorder.

Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people other than the Shadwell Childcare manager, the deputy safeguarding officer and key person or other member of staff as appropriate. Occasionally, external bodies such as police or Ofsted may request sight of child protection records.

Child protection records will be passed to the child's new childcare setting or school at transition. In the rare event that a child leaves Shadwell Childcare and does not transfer to another education setting, the child protection file will be retained securely until the end of the academic year of the child's 25th birthday. It will then be destroyed confidentially in line with Data Protection legislation.

Any record relating to an allegation of harm made against a member of staff or other adult will be retained securely in their personnel file until retirement age or for 10 years (whichever is the longest) and will then be destroyed confidentially in line with Data Protection legislation.

A set time is given for safeguarding supervision of staff, where any concerns can be discussed.

A record of accidents/incidents notified to us by parents/carers will be recorded & stored securely. See also "*Information sharing: advice for practitioners* (DfE 2024)

Definitions of abuse and neglect

"A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, **including where they see, hear, or experience its effects**. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children" *Working together to safeguard children* (DfE 2023)

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. .

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific issue in education settings.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet the basic physical and/or psychological needs of a child, likely to result in the impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment; or provide a suitable education. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Shadwell Childcare works within the Leeds SCP Neglect strategy and the Recognising, Assessing and Responding to Neglect; Practitioner Guidance; version 2.

<https://www.leedsscp.org.uk/LSCB/media/Images/pdfs/Recognising-Assessing-and-Responding-to-Neglect;-2nd-edition;-2019.pdf>

Liaising with other bodies

Shadwell Childcare operates in accordance with guidelines laid down by the registering authority. Information held in our confidential records relating to children about whom Shadwell Childcare has concerns will be

shared with the relevant partner agencies if Shadwell Childcare feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.

Where the concern relates to a child who is also a pupil of Shadwell Primary School (e.g. a child in OOSC) or whose sibling attends Shadwell Primary School, the DSL may share some information with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead if it is believed that to not do so may place the child at increased risk of significant harm.

We will maintain ongoing contact with the registering authority, together with names, addresses and telephone numbers of individual social workers, to ensure that it would be easy, in any emergency, for Shadwell Childcare and Children's Social Work Services to work well together.

Specific issues

At Shadwell Childcare, we recognise that we have responsibilities to protect children from abuse and neglect and that we also have a responsibility to safeguard children from some specific risks of harm including through the curriculum. These include recognising and responding to indicators that a child may be at risk of being radicalised, may be living with domestic abuse, at risk of honour based abuse, could be exposed to online risks or that a girl may have experienced or be at risk of female genital mutilation.

Through the formal and informal curriculum and by promoting the fundamental British values, we aim to give our children the skills to keep themselves safe, to seek help, to express their views and feelings, and to make healthy choices.

Sexually harmful behaviour and child on child abuse

We recognise that it is possible for a child to harm another child. With very young children, this is rarely intentional or predatory and may well be an indicator that the child in question is themselves experiencing some form of abuse or may have unmet needs.

We minimise the risk of child:child abuse through the curriculum and by role modelling, for example 'being kind to each other', 'safe touch', 'my friends' – see also the Behaviour policy, Equality and Diversity policy and British Values curriculum. Children are closely supervised by staff and supported to play positively with their peers. In the event that a child demonstrated harmful sexual behaviour, staff would follow the SCC child protection policy and Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency procedures which include an expectation that the child displaying the behaviour and any child/ren that had experienced harm as a result would be referred to Leeds children's social work services. In some circumstances, this referral may need to be made without prior discussion with the parents / carers of the child/ren involved.

Domestic abuse

As a result of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, children who live with or are exposed to domestic abuse or coercive control are now recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right. Staff have received training on domestic abuse and are aware that any concerns or disclosures (including disclosures from a parent) must be recorded on a cause for concern form and passed to the DSL who will make a referral to CSWS and / or the multi-agency risk assessment conference coordinator (MARAC). Shadwell Childcare will ensure that parents / carers experiencing domestic abuse are signposted to local services who may be able to offer support. If a child is known to be living with domestic abuse, Shadwell Childcare staff will work with partner agencies to develop any safety plan that may be needed.

We are aware that Operation Encompass does not currently notify early years settings / OOSC providers of incidents of domestic abuse, in the way that schools are currently notified.

Supporting families

Shadwell Childcare will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff and volunteers in the group.

Where abuse at home is suspected, Shadwell Childcare will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

We will discuss concerns with the parent(s) unless we believe that to do so may place the child – or other children – at increased risk or it is not possible to contact the parent (e.g. because the given phone number is unobtainable or the parent does not respond).

With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, Shadwell Childcare will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

COVID and future pandemic arrangements

Shadwell Childcare complies with Government direction on whether it is necessary to close the setting to most children. We endeavour to provide continuity of care to all vulnerable children and, where possible, to the children of critical / essential workers, even when we are required to close to others. If the school is required to close, we do not encourage parents to bring their school-age children to our OOSC.

In cases where children cannot attend our provision due to a bubble self-isolating or Government direction to close to most children, the staff will maintain contact with the children through safe and well checks, telephone contact and / or Facetime / Zoom type interactions. If we are not able to contact a parent or child and have concerns about their safety, we will follow the safeguarding steps outlined above and contact CSWS or the police to request a welfare visit.

We recognise that the pandemic was extremely difficult for children and their parents / carers, and that the impact on some children can still be seen; nationally, there is an increase in mental health difficulties, domestic abuse and child abuse. Parents can contact the manager if they are worried and we regularly signpost our families to external agencies that can provide advice and support.

See also our Attendance policy

"If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children's social care services and, in emergencies, the police."

"Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" para 3.7 p22.

You should make sure you know where to turn to if you need to **ask for help**, and that you **refer** to children's social work service or to the police, if you suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is immediate danger.

"What to do if you're worried a child is being abused " (DfE 2015 para 2) .

In Leeds this means

If **providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare** and **if you need to ask for help** but are unsure whether it requires referral advice can be sought by calling any one of the following:

Childcare consultant team **0113 2474563** (Monday-Thursday 8.30-5 or Friday 8.30-4.30)

OR

Carole Gillan (Cooper), 0-11 Safeguarding Co-ordinator based with the Integrated Safeguarding Unit, **0113 2474744** (Monday-Thursday 8.30-5 or Friday 8.30-4.30)

OR

Integrated Safeguarding Unit **0113 2951211** (Monday-Thursday 8.30-5 or Friday 8.30-4.30)

Without delay - seeking advice should not delay any referral you need to make, if for any reason you are unable to contact the above sources of support you are advised to contact Duty and Advice to ensure that children are protected and there is no delay in any referral that may need to be made.

Providers must **notify agencies with statutory responsibilities** by contacting **Duty and Advice 0113 3760336 (out of hours 0113 2409536)** to make a referral. Duty and Advice are part of Children's Social Work Services (CSWS) - it is to Duty and Advice that providers make a referral. Duty and Advice is sometimes referred to as the 'Front Door' for accessing statutory services for children who providers have concerns about.

Please note Duty and Advice cannot give anonymous advice, they are able to give advice if you share details of the child(ren) and family.

Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership does not offer general or specific advice regarding children or situations however advice can be given by any one of the above without the need to identify the child.

In emergencies the police, please remember that if the concern or situation is an emergency contact the police. For **non-emergencies dial 101**, in an **emergency always dial 999**.

The Seven golden rules for sharing information (including personal information):

- 1. All children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect. Protecting a child from such harm takes priority over protecting their privacy, or the privacy rights of the person(s) failing to protect them.** The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) provide a framework¹ to support information sharing where practitioners have reason to believe failure to share information may result in the child being at risk of harm.
- 2. When you have a safeguarding concern, wherever it is practicable and safe to do so, engage with the child² and/or their carer(s), and explain who you intend to share information with, what information you will be sharing and why.** You are not required to inform them, if you have reason to believe that doing so may put the child at increased risk of harm (e.g., because their carer(s) may harm the child, or react violently to anyone seeking to intervene, or because the child might withhold information or withdraw from services).
- 3. You do not need consent to share personal information about a child and/or members of their family if a child is at risk or there is a perceived risk of harm.** You need a lawful basis³ to share information under data protection law, but when you intend to share information as part of action to safeguard a child at possible risk of harm⁴, consent may not be an appropriate basis for sharing. It is good practice to ensure transparency about your decisions and seek to work cooperatively with a child and their carer(s) wherever possible. This means you should consider any objection the child or their carers may have to proposed information sharing, but you should consider overriding their objections if you believe sharing the information is necessary to protect the child from harm.
- 4. Seek advice promptly whenever you are uncertain or do not fully understand how the legal framework supports information sharing in a particular case.** Do not leave a child at risk of harm because you have concerns you might be criticised for sharing information. Instead, find out who in your organisation/agency can provide advice about what information to share and with whom. This may be your manager/supervisor, the designated safeguarding children professional, the data protection/information governance lead (e.g., Data Protection Officer⁵), Caldicott Guardian, or relevant policy or legal team. If you work for a small charity or voluntary organisation, follow the NSPCC's safeguarding guidance.
- 5. When sharing information, ensure you and the person or agency/organisation that receives the information take steps to protect the identities of any individuals (e.g., the child, a carer, a neighbour, or a colleague) who might suffer harm if their details became known to an abuser or one of their associates.**

6. **Only share relevant and accurate information with individuals or agencies/organisations that have a role in safeguarding the child and/or providing their family with support, and only share the information they need to support the provision of their services.** Sharing information with a third party rarely requires you to share an entire record or case-file – you must only share information that is necessary, proportionate for the intended purpose, relevant, adequate and accurate.
7. **Record the reasons for your information sharing decision, irrespective of whether or not you decide to share information.** When another practitioner or organisation requests information from you, and you decide not to share it, be prepared to explain why you chose not to do so. Be willing to reconsider your decision if the requestor shares new information that might cause you to regard information you hold in a new light. When recording any decision, clearly set out the rationale and be prepared to explain your reasons if you are asked.