

Halton SEND Carer's Forum

Confidentiality Policy



Approved by:	HSCF Committee Officers
Approved on	14th MARCH 2022
Reviewed on:	
Next review due on:	MARCH 2025

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This aim of this policy is to protect the interests of our service users and to ensure that they can have trust and confidence in Halton Send Carer's Forum (HSCF). It sets out our practices and procedures for dealing with personal information relating to service users.

All staff, volunteers and trustees will abide by this policy in dealing with all information given to us by service users, 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. HSCF offers a confidential service to its users.
2. The personal information given by service users to HSCF staff, volunteers and trustees will not be passed on to anyone outside HSCF without their permission, except in exceptional circumstances. Personal information means anything the service user tells us about themselves their circumstances, and their caring situation. This includes the fact that they have been in contact with HSCF.
3. We will record only the minimum of information we need in order to offer continuity to service users. Any records we keep concerning a service user will be made available to them on request. Any such request should be made in line with statutory guidance on Subject Access Requests. We will record information about service users in ways which are accurate, respectful and which we would be happy to let them read.
4. People using HSCF have the right to remain anonymous if they choose, although this might restrict their access to some services.
5. Any records will be kept safely and securely, and in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR (see Data Protection policy).
6. We also collect anonymous statistical and anecdotal information, to allow us to contribute to the design, planning and review of services. We share this with other agencies who provide or fund services to children and young people with SEND and their families.
7. Safeguarding issues will always override the need for confidentiality. We reserve the right to breach confidentiality when sharing information that is vital to child and/or service user protection (see HSCF 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 service user to be in a life-threatening situation.
 - c) If a service user 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 Chair. The organisation's other Officers will be informed of this decision to breach confidentiality as soon as is reasonably practical.
- 9. Where possible, we will let the person(s) involved know that we intend to breach confidentiality and the reasons for this.